



THE TIMES

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Miniskirts, flower power, protest and paranoia... 1968, when the Sixties were really swinging

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Three-year referendum campaign to decide fate of the pound now begins in earnest

Euro dream transformed into reality

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN dreamers finally saw their cherished hope become reality at midnight when 11 countries signed away their sovereignty over monetary policy and the single currency was born.

The birth of the euro was marked in Brussels with a mass balloon launch and toast poured from methuselahs of champagne as ministers spoke of a great moment in history and set their sights on deeper political and economic union.

But there were still sour notes amid the rhetoric, with a public spat between France and Wim Duisenberg over whether he would step down as governor of the European Central Bank in favour of a Frenchman in four years. Germany used the occasion to fire another warning shot at Britain over the need for "ending unfair competition" and for raising low rates of tax in the EU, while Jacques Santer, the European Commission president, provoked a row by insisting that Britain's eventual membership of the single currency was inevitable.

"As I understand the British Government and the Chancellor, it is not a question of if the UK will join, but when," he told BBC Radio Four's *The World This Weekend*.

EURO EXCHANGE RATES

Deutschmark	1.93633
French franc	6.55957
Italian lire	1936.27
Spanish peseta	166.639
Portuguese escudo	200.482
Finnish markka	5.94573
Dutch guilder	0.775564
Austrian schilling	13.7603
Belgian franc	40.3399
Luxembourg franc	40.3399
Sterling	70.4
US dollar	1.63657
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He also angered Tories by insisting that the euro would lead to further political integration. "I think the euro is not only a factor of economic integration, but also of political integration," he said.

Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, retorted that it was "extremely arrogant and simply wrong" to suggest that membership was inevitable. He said: "Labour is trying to bounce Britain into the euro zone by giving a nod and a wink to European politicians."

In Brussels, the 11 "Euro-land" nations were taking what was seen as the most significant leap to that integration since the launch of the Common Market more than 40 years ago by handing power

for setting interest rates to the Frankfurt-based ECB. These open at 3 percent.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the French minister, set the tone by declaring: "This, December 31, 1998, will be one of the great dates in the history of the 20th century."

Other ministers invoked the history of the moment, by emphasising the dramatic political consequences of their action in creating a currency zone of 290 million people that they said would rival the United States in commercial power. "This is a decisive step towards the ever closer political union of Europe," said Carlo Ciampi of Italy.

Only Charles McCreery of Ireland acknowledged uncertainty when he said: "Everybody is joining in an experiment, and with any experiment one cannot say with 100 per cent certainty that it will be an outstanding success," he said. Ireland was worried about the absence of Britain, its main trading partner, he added.

M Strauss-Kahn told *The Times* that the "Euro-11" council of finance ministers would rapidly become the "economic government of Europe", setting policy to match the monetary power of the ECB. And Germany, which takes over the EU presidency today, has an ambitious programme for further integration. Werner Müller, the Economy Minister



Children waiting for the launch of 3,000 balloons to mark the launch of the euro in Brussels yesterday. The grown-ups drank champagne

ing to send a minister to the Brussels event, despatched Sir Stephen Wall, its EU ambassador, to wish the project well. The Government was "fully committed to doing all it can to ensure that success," Sir Stephen said.

Although the new notes and coins will not appear for three years, the euro is now the standard currency of Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. Denmark, Sweden, Britain and Greece remain outside. Pesetas, francs, marks and other national currencies

become arithmetically awkward sub-divisions, with, for example, one euro being worth 6.69957 French francs. But in a move aimed at opening competition and cutting costs, euros can immediately be used for cheques, bank accounts, credit cards, company accounts and bills and stock market prices.

The fixing of the rates started a frantic weekend for more than 50,000 staff in the City of London and other European financial centres in preparation for switching all trading to euros on Monday.

The launch of the euro also

saw the start of the real battle for the pound, with enthusiasts and sceptics firing their first shots in what is likely to be a bitter struggle in the coming years.

Eighteen leading members of the Business for Sterling pressure group write in a letter to *The Times* today that the single currency could exacerbate Europe's economic problems and that while they wish the euro well, they insist that Britain should stay outside. And Paul Sykes, who financed many sceptical MPs in the last election campaign, promises in *The Times* that writes in

The *Times* that anti-European groups would give no quarter in the battle to keep Britain outside. The euro would "fatally undermine the legitimacy of our domestic democratic institutions," he writes.

But Sir Leon Brittan, vice-chairman of the European Commission, predicted that Britain would join in three years' time when people realised they were missing out on the advantages of the euro. "Britain shouldn't be left behind," he said, while Lord Howe of Aberavon urged Tony Blair to "take risks" and set a date for joining.

Carey pleads for refugees

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, is to make an appeal today for greater public understanding of the world's 50 million refugees forced from their homes by war, natural disaster or persecution.

In his message on BBC1 this morning, the Archbishop will criticise the British media for "snipping up" fear and hostility against the 50,000 asylum seekers in this country.

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Et tu Brutus? Jenkins was ready to ban French wines

BY ADRIAN LEE AND JAMES LANDALE

LORD JENKINS of Hillhead admitted yesterday that in 1968 he was the architect of a secret Labour plan, code-named Brutus, to ban foreign holidays and stop luxury imports. French wine, Swiss watches, avocados and out-of-season strawberries were on the list to save the economy.

Lord Jenkins, then the Labour Chancellor, and not unknown for his love of claret, drew up the contingency scheme in such secrecy that only Harold Wilson, the Prime Minister, and a handful of Cabinet ministers were aware of its existence.

Despite devaluation in 1967, the pound was still under pressure in March 1968 after two months of poor trade figures. The Government was desperate to avoid a second devaluation.



Jenkins: emergency plan to save the economy

plan was drafted eight times by a small group of trusted economic advisers and ready by the summer of 1968 to be implemented within a week in the event of a "major external catastrophe" such as the gold crisis of earlier that year.

The documents reveal that Brutus could also have been implemented if two further poor sets of balance of payments figures were published. It would also have seen banks closed for four days, and sterling assets held by foreign countries blocked. Wages were to have been frozen, embassy staff paid and defence and foreign-aid spending cut.

A less severe alternative involved setting quotas to limit the import of items such as cut flowers, jam, beer, chocolate and stockings. It was estimated that the move would save Britain £910 million in 1969. Wilson and his colleagues

agonised over the inclusion of tinned salmon on the list. According to one paper, although savings of £8.7 million would be made "a shortage would be unpopular particularly in the North of England where it is a traditional high tea food". Similarly, quotas on tinned fruit could damage the Australian economy.

Lord Jenkins, now a senior Liberal Democrat, said yesterday that the plans were very much his "baby". He said: "They were drawn up in the Treasury. Harold Wilson was in a very supine mood at that time."

Asked about the potential impact on his reputation of banning goods such as avocados, he dismissed the question as "trivial". He said: "It would have been very foolish if you didn't plan for worst cases."

SURVIVORS of the Yemen hostage crisis criticised ministers yesterday for failing to send an RAF aircraft to bring them home swiftly.

Their journey to Britain will be in three stages: a flight from Aden to Sana'a in North Yemen, a Yemen Airways flight to Paris, and then, after a three-hour wait, a British Airways connection to Gatwick.

The Foreign Office in London yesterday summoned Yemen's Ambassador to demand an explanation for the delay in which three Britons and an Australian died.

One of the freed men, David Holmes, said: "I have had enough of this farce. Why haven't our government done more?" Laurence Whitehouse, whose wife Margaret died in the shoot-out, said: "We are sick of being shuffled around."

The 1968 files, pages 4, 5

Hostages furious at delays

Yemen 'white wash', page 9

Happy MDCCCCLXXXVIII. Or is it?

BY GILES WHITTELL

WELCOME to the year MIM, as the Emperor Flavian might have said. Then again, he might have preferred to wish his subjects a happy new MCMXCIX. Or should that be MCMXCVIII? We have no idea, but some guidance from the ancients would have been useful; 23 centuries after the invention of Roman numerals, confusion reigns as to how they should be used to indicate the year 1999. The Year 1999 Problem has left architects dithering over how to inscribe their cornerstones and film studios in a quandary over the dating of their new releases.

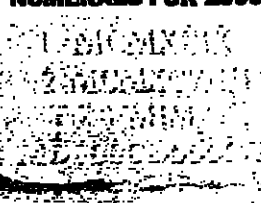
Using the Romans' system of numerals

als in its simplest form, the year that begins today is MDCCCCLXXXVIII — enough to make a stone-mason change trades. Instead, short-cuts were devised, the best-known of which is simple subtraction — the system by which IX equals nine and XIX is 19.

For modern scholars, however, subtraction adds a problem. Roman numerals were based, some say, on signs people used to count with their fingers. With no single inventor to etch in stone a manual for their proper use, it remains unclear when, if ever, subtraction was acceptable for formal dating.

Paul Lewis, a London book collector, says the figures XL, or 50 minus 10, or 40, were found among the ruins of Flavian's Colosseum. Others, like the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Washington, which has been assigned the Year 1999 problem by the US Government, claim subtraction is largely a 19th-century convenience.

COMPETING ROMAN NUMERALS FOR 1999



Leading article, page 17

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GERMANY	6	29	79p	AUSTRALIA	7	49	86p
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Embrace the refugees, says Archbishop

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN
SOCIAL AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, will today appeal for greater public understanding of the 50 million refugees throughout the world, uprooted from their homes by persecution, war or natural disaster.

In his annual new-year message, to be broadcast at 12.30pm on BBC1 today, Dr Carey criticises the media in Britain for whipping up "fear and hostility" against the 50,000 or so asylum-seekers in this country and suggests it is wrong to think of them merely as welfare "scroungers".

"The presence of strangers can make us nervous or even angry. But people don't readily uproot themselves from all that is familiar — choosing to leave homeland, family and friends is probably the most painful decision they will ever have to make," he says.

Dr Carey points out that the baby Jesus, whose family was forced to flee to Egypt shortly after his birth, is probably his



Marlene Dietrich: one of most famous refugees

story's best-known refugee. He adds that some of the great names of our century have been refugees, including Albert Einstein, the Jewish mathematician who fled Germany in 1933; Marc Chagall, the Jewish painter who fled Russia for France in 1922; and the German actress Marlene Dietrich, who settled in the United States.

The Archbishop's speech was inspired by a meeting he

had earlier this week with two Romany children from Slovakia, Tina, 9, and Puckie, 6, who are seeking asylum in Britain with their parents. The family left their homeland two years ago as a result of growing discrimination against Romanies.

Once in Britain the family faced further hostility and were forced to move to a different town after a brick was thrown through the window of their home.

Drawing on the Christian theme of hospitality to strangers, Dr Carey stresses the importance of providing both a material and spiritual home for every body.

"While we hope and pray that Tina and Puckie and other refugees may find a place they may call home, each of us is a spiritual refugee travelling through life, looking for the one of whom it is said in the Scripture: 'The Eternal God is your refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms.' That is where we can all find a place called home," he says.

His speech comes amid growing political and public concern over what to do about the thousands of refugees coming into Britain each year. More than 45,000 refugees are now seeking asylum in the UK, most in London and the South East, with a continuing influx from war-torn Kosovo and Albania. The Home Office has already admitted that it is facing the biggest immigration crisis in a decade.

Local authorities are obliged to look after asylum-seekers who arrive on their doorstep. South East England has been most hard-pressed because many arrive at London's airports or the Channel ports.

Refugees can choose any local authority to ask for help. They are usually accommodated in bed-and-breakfast or cheap rented flats. Single adults are only entitled to food vouchers and shelter under the National Assistance Act 1948 which requires councils to help the destitute. They cannot be given cash.



Seconds out: Brian Tipper cleaning the face of Big Ben's clock yesterday ready for the new year chimes. The mechanism was adjusted to add a second to the last minute of 1998, to keep time with atomic clocks

Prescott seeks to counter image of strife

BY ROLAND WATSON

JOHN PRESCOTT insisted yesterday he was "fully on board" Tony Blair's modernising crusade as he tried to counter the impression of a Cabinet riven by power struggles after Peter Mandelson's departure.

But the Deputy Prime Minister gave the clearest indication yet that he believed the Prime Minister's policy of working with the Liberal Democrats had gone far enough. He used the past tense when asked about further areas of co-operation. He said he fully supported cross-party efforts on devolution. But he added: "What we carried out was in the manifesto and what the Prime Minister put forward." His comments provided the strongest sign that Mr Prescott would oppose any moves to offer Paddy Ashdown a Cabinet post.

Mr Prescott insisted he was behind the Government's legislative proposals and dismissed reports of rifts at the top of the Cabinet as "prattle". He told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "We are a modernising government. There is a new Labour Government that has produced a radical programme that we can be really proud of, and I am very supportive of all those measures."

With Mr Blair abroad, Mr Prescott had previously used a newspaper interview to say that he and the Chancellor had agreed on a more interventionist approach to the economy. The Left used his embrace of "the Keynesian way" to demand that traditional Labour values return to the heart of policy making. But yesterday he tried to calm the festering influence that has followed Mr Mandelson's resignation, denying that he was taking advantage of Mr Blair's absence to flex his muscles.

Downing Street sources said No 10 was relaxed about Mr Prescott's earlier comments, which they said had been designed to show that claims of a feud between Mr Prescott and Mr Brown were untrue. The sources added that his views on co-operation with the Liberal Democrats were well known, and similar to those of some other ministers.

SUCCESS SPRUNG FROM PERSECUTION

Ben Elton: comedian. Grandfather Victor Ehrenberg was eminent historian and a refugee from Czechoslovakia.

The Fugees: rap group. Two members who are also solo artists — Wyclef Jean and Pras Michel — are both from Haiti. Lord (Lew) Grade: Jewish Russian refugee. TV mogul with brother Leslie. Until his death last month was chairman of the Grade Co and ITC entertainment. Michael, son of Leslie Grade, is former controller of BBC1 and chief executive of Channel 4. Now chairman of First Leisure.

Lord (Paul) Hamlyn: publishing tycoon and patron of the arts. Came from Germany as a six-year-old refugee. Margaret Hodge, MP: father was a refugee from Nazi Germany. Sir Richard Rogers: archi-

tect. Mother was refugee from Trieste in 1938.

Lord (Maurice) and Charles Saatchi: advertising tycoons. Sons of Iranian Jewish refugee textile merchant.

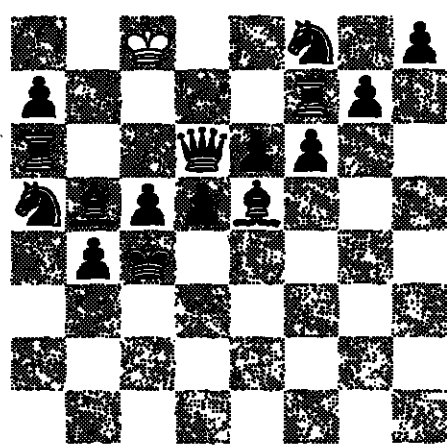
Tanya Sarneck: fashion designer and creator of Ghost label. Father was a Russian refugee who fled to London in 1939.

Sir Georg Solti: conductor. Was director of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in the 1960s and went on to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Born in Budapest, he was a refugee from the Nazi regime.

Christopher Wreh: footballer, plays for Arsenal. He escaped to France from Liberia when he was 14.

Alek Weir: model from Sudan. When she was 14, her family were forced to flee after a military coup.

easy@demon[no.2]



black to win in as many moves as it takes.

Tories call for more studies of GM crops

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE Tories yesterday called for a delay of at least three years on the commercial growing of genetically modified crops to allow time for more research into their safety.

Tim Yeo, the Shadow Agriculture Minister, said that widespread anxieties about such crops needed to be allayed if their potentially significant benefits for future food production were to be realised. Commercial planting should be postponed for at least the rest of this Parliament, Mr Yeo said, by which time a number of government-commissioned studies on the environmental impact of genetically modified crops would have been completed.

"We will have a lot more information by then and the position could be reviewed," he said. There is a very strong argument for somewhat more caution than the Government has so far shown, and very little to be lost by slowing down a bit."

He added: "Many environmental groups have called for a moratorium for up to three years to ensure a proper examination of the impact of genetically modified organisms on the British countryside."

"The Labour Government's attitude to this is not clear but

the case for delay has been strengthened by their failure to provide full details of their own testing."

"Against this background I believe the commercial release of such crops should be delayed until the results of government-commissioned studies on the impact of genetically modified crops are available," he said.

In October the Government announced that it had reached a voluntary agreement with the plant-breeding industry for a delay of at least three years in the commercial growing of any crops genetically engineered to be resistant to insect pests.



Yeo: wants moratorium on planting new crops

Hague enlists rank-and-file help on policy

BY ROLAND WATSON, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

RANK-and-file Tories will for the first time be given direct input into policymaking in what William Hague yesterday described as a year of fundamental change for his party.

Mr Hague said that 1999 had to be the "year of ideas", new thinking and fresh language, and announced a radical overhaul of policies to put the Tories "back on the electoral map".

A new mechanism for policy-making will give party activists, outside experts and backbench MPs a say in the direction of the party. The aim is to broaden the appeal of policies and try to ensure they are guaranteed a high degree of popular support before they are sprung on voters.

Shadow cabinet ministers are to head new "policy agenda groups" covering issues ranging from health, welfare and education to agriculture, local government and the economy. They will be expected to discuss policy with outside experts, including academics and those at the sharp end in each field, along with members of the party's rank and file and backbench MPs.

The groups will use the preliminary results of the party's Listening to Britain campaign as their starting point, and

will be encouraged to commission further research. The initial proposals will be pulled together in an Agenda for Britain, which will be published and debated by the party later in the year.

Although Tories will deny that they are resorting to the "focus group" approach adopted by Labour before the last election, the development means that policies will be tested to a far greater degree before they are unveiled.

The details came in a letter from Mr Hague to local constituency party chairmen, delivered as he spent his winter holiday in Montana.

Mr Hague said that the party could not simply rely on the Government and the Liberal Democrats to make mistakes. "We need to develop a fresh, positive and compassionate Conservative agenda for the next century. That means a thorough overhaul of all our policies," he said.

In his letter, Mr Hague said: "Each time our great party has been in opposition, we have turned misfortune to our advantage and developed the new thinking that has taken a new generation of Conservatives back into government. Now it falls to us to begin that process again."

Motorists warned of fuel 'scam'

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS are to issue warnings to prevent a multimillion-pound "scam" misleading motorists into having their car engines converted unnecessarily.

About six million motorists will be unable to buy leaded petrol for their cars from January 2000, when a European Union ban comes into force. Ministers are worried that unscrupulous garage mechanics will try to persuade drivers to pay up to £500 to have their engines converted to run on unleaded petrol, when many will do so without a conversion.

A national information campaign will

be mounted this month in garages, service stations and MOT testing centres, telling motorists to beware of those pressing them to have expensive conversions.

Up to three-and-a-half million cars running on leaded petrol will be able to switch to unleaded without any changes. Other engines will need adjustments to their ignition timing.

Motorists driving an estimated 2.3 million cars whose engines could be harmed by unleaded petrol will be able to buy "lead replacement petrol" from the autumn, as leaded petrol is phased out. The petrol contains additional lubricant to reduce engine wear.

The information campaign will stress

that motorists should seek advice from motoring organisations, car manufacturers or petrol retailers on the best alternative to leaded petrol.

The ban on leaded fuel, which has been in force in many European countries for several years, is intended to reduce pollution. But the Treasury will lose about £500 million a year from the higher rates of duty charged on four-star leaded petrol, which costs about 6 pence a litre more than unleaded petrol.

Ministers concede that it is unlikely that this money could be recouped from motorists, who already face a 9 per cent increase in duty, equivalent to about 2p per litre this year.

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Avalanche survivors tell of lonely wait for rescuers



Sarah Finch and Steven Newton: lost contact in snow.

By GILLIAN HARRIS AND
STEPHEN FARRELL

THE young couple buried beneath an avalanche in the Highlands yesterday told how they lay unable to move for 16 hours, not knowing if the other was alive or dead.

Sarah Finch, 25, and her boyfriend, Steven Newton, 24, from Darford, Kent, were recovering from mild hypothermia in Fort William yesterday. Four friends died in the avalanche on Aonach Mor on Tuesday. Their guide, Roger Wild, survived.

Miss Finch said their group of Venture Scout leaders had spent 2,000ft up the mountain while the guide checked the route ahead. "The

snow came from behind us. It knocked us off our feet and then what seemed to be a second wave of snow covered our heads. The next thing I remember is being trapped in almost a block of ice with just a small little space which I dug out to breathe.

"As far as I could remember I was shouting all night but the rescue team said I was so deep that even when they were digging me out they couldn't hear me. I heard somebody shouting. I didn't know who it was, but I now know it was Steve. I heard Roger shouting right at the very end when the rescue team was digging us out."

For Mr Newton it was the second lucky escape. In 1990 his sailing boat

went missing for 24 hours at sea in a storm, prompting his parents last night to say that he had led a "charmed life".

Describing the avalanche, he said: "I remember waking up and not being able to move any of my limbs: panicking because I am claustrophobic and I had snow all around me in a tiny space. I thrashed my head around and managed to enlarge the space, and throughout the night I slowly managed to get one arm out and then the other."

"I found an ice axe in the snow which I used to my and dig my way out. Towards the end of the night I managed to get a hole to the surface and tried to drag myself out but my

feet were trapped. I couldn't get my feet loose at all. I tried shouting during the night and I did hear a female voice. I couldn't decide if it was Sarah."

Mr Newton said: "I was overwhelmed at getting out, not having known if there would be another wave of snow coming down while I was trapped there. It was so frustrating at the time as I had dug my way to the surface and just could not get out to start digging for other people. I just had to lie there and wait."

Asked if he would embark on a similar exercise again, he said: "It will take quite a while to come to terms with what has happened and the loss of our good friends."

The three survivors were expected

to spend one more night in hospital. Miss Finch, an embryologist, suffered injuries to her elbow, leg, ankle and a finger and Mr Newton, a transmissions engineer, injured his left foot.

Brian Tregaskis, a consultant physician at Fort William Hospital, said: "They are extremely lucky individuals. Their physical injuries are at a minimum."

Mr Wild said in a statement: "My main thoughts are with the bereaved families. I am very pleased that two of the group have survived and would like to thank the rescue team and the medical services for their prompt and professional actions, which undoubtedly saved our lives."

Father tells of vain fight to save sea boy

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A FATHER told yesterday of how he fought for 34 hours to keep his nine-year-old son alive in icy waters after their boat sank during their first fishing trip together, only for the boy to die at hospital.

Jonathan Vowles and two friends sang and cuddled the boy, Lewis, while they trod water, waiting to be rescued. Despite their efforts, Lewis slipped in and out of consciousness and died in hospital of hypothermia.

Mr Vowles, 35, told his family from his hospital bed: "We did everything we could. The water was very cold and we knew we had to keep Lewis awake."

"I hugged and cuddled him and we took it in turns to lift him clear of the water. We sang songs to him and whenever he looked like falling asleep we shook him and slapped his face to keep him awake."

Mr Vowles had bought his son a fishing rod for Christmas and had promised to take him out to sea. The boy, who lived with his mother and elder sister in Brighton, had spent Christmas with his father and his second wife at their home at Tonypre, in south Wales.

His grandfather, Harry Vowles, said yesterday: "Lewis had been looking forward to it



Lewis Vowles: died on his first fishing trip

all over Christmas and could talk about nothing else."

Lewis and his father set off on their expedition as soon as the weather improved after Christmas. They made the 20-mile trip to the harbour at Penarth, near Cardiff, with their friends, Steve Buck, 19, and Kevin Gardner, 32, the owner of their 16-foot boat *Helen Marie*.

The party had been fishing for four hours when Mr Vowles said his wife, Jane, on his mobile phone to say they were calling it a day.

Mr Vowles said: "Five minutes later a hole suddenly appeared in the boat as if we had struck something. The boat sank so quickly we couldn't get off an emergency flare."

The three men and the boy,

all of whom were wearing life-jackets, scrambled out of the boat as it went down two miles offshore in an area known as the Newport Deep. They blew whistles as two tankers passed nearby, but the ships failed to see them. They had been in the water for almost four hours when they were heard by the crew of another tanker, *The Astir*, which was waiting for a pilot to guide it into Newport.

The group were picked up by an inshore lifeboat, then winched aboard an RAF helicopter. Lewis was unconscious when he was taken to Cardiff Royal Infirmary. His father and friends were treated for hypothermia at the University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff.

Coastguards said that the group was well equipped with life-jackets and whistles, but that the slightly built nine-year-old stood little chance in such cold water.

A report on the accident is being compiled for the Cardiff Coroner Dr Lawrence Addicott, and an inquiry by the Marine Accident Investigation Bureau is also under way.

Chief Inspector Paul Kemp, of South Wales Police, described the accident as "tragic".

"We are still trying to recover the boat from the waters to examine it to discover how it capsized," he said.



After: at a trim 9st 3lb, Mrs Miles can now go clothes shopping with her daughter



Before: Beverly Miles weighed in at 24st 11lb

Fear of death led woman to lose 15st

By RUSSELL JENKINS

BEVERLEY MILES is an inspiration to anyone resolving to slim down to a fighting weight in the new year. She has lost 15 stone in two years.

The 35-year-old mother from Great Sankey, Cheshire, once weighed 25 stone and shopped for clothes in the 32-plus range. Now she is officially a size 10 — petite.

Mrs Miles has enjoyed the most dramatic weight loss among five finalists in the *Slimming* magazine slimmer of the year award.

She said: "I feel literally

that I have been given a second chance at life. The quality of my life has improved tremendously. I can now go to aerobic classes with my 15-year-old daughter Tina and shop for clothes in the same store."

Two years ago it was very different. At almost 15 stone overweight, it is no surprise I constantly thought about dying."

Mrs Miles, who is only 5ft 4in tall, weighed 24st 11lb. Now she tips the scales at a trim 9st 3lb.

Saggy cat gives rivals a stuffing

BAGPUSS, the saggy old cloth cat, has been declared the all-time favourite children's programme in a national poll.

More than 40,000 BBC viewers cast their votes by post, telephone or e-mail to affirm their love for the cuddly pink and yellow striped cat, ahead of shows including *The Magic Roundabout*, *Bill and Ben* and *Play School*.

Bagpuss made his debut in 1974 as part of *Watch With Mother*. Only 13 episodes were made by Smallfilms, which also made *Noggin the Nog*. Bagpuss told stories with friends including Professor Yaffle the woodpecker and the mice from the Mouse Organ.

Lorraine Heggessey, head of BBC Children's Production, said: "It is always programmes we watched when we were youngest that have a special place in our hearts. Bagpuss is a favourite with today's twenty-somethings and it's great to see that they are just as keen to wallow in nostalgia as the rest



Bagpuss's career lasted for only 13 episodes

of us." Bagpuss will be declared the winner on BBC1 today during *Are You Sitting Comfortably?*, a tribute to children's programmes.

The video for Michael Jackson's 1983 hit *Thriller*, in which he became a werewolf, has been voted best pop video of all time. Nearly 100,000 people voted in the poll, held by the cable television channel VH1.

Cartoon ties the limit for business women

By JOANNA BALE

MEN who wear ties decorated with pictures of cartoon characters may think they are expressing a wacky sense of humour but to their women colleagues they denote immaturity and bad taste.

According to a survey of 300 women delegates at conference centres around Britain, a knot of pure silk with a subtle geometric pattern is far preferable to a garish slash of stain-resistant polyester featuring novelty sheep.

Top of the hate list were Disney characters such as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, followed by the comic book hero Dennis the Menace and the animated Plasticine duo Wallace and Gromit.

A resounding 81 per cent of the female managers surveyed said choice of tie was an important factor when it came to making first impressions with clients, while 74 per cent said unsuitable appearance at



Knotty problem: women were unimpressed

work would lessen chances of promotion.

In spite of their dubious merits, novelty ties continue to be big sellers in thousands of stores, from the high street retail chain Ties Rack to the designer emporium Hermes.

The department store John Lewis found them to be such a money-spinner that they commissioned an extensive range

under their own brand Jonelle featuring animals such as pigs, flamingoes, and tortoises, and a selection of vegetables, priced at £12.50. A spokeswoman said: "They sell very well, particularly in our London stores. There are obviously thousands of men out there who love to brighten up their suits with them."

The French designer Hermes, which makes silk ties featuring animals and trees for a cool £65, also declared them to be top sellers. Fabienne Kozel at the New Bond Street store in London said: "Last year was our Year of Africa, so we had ties featuring animals such as elephants, giraffes and zebras, which were top sellers."

"This year is the Year of the Tree, so we have trees, which are also popular. Next year is the Year of the Galaxy, so we will have moons and stars. They are nothing like cartoon ties — they are very recognisable as Hermes."

Explosives used to recover body

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

THE body of a potholer trapped underground for more than 17 hours was recovered yesterday.

Peter Fowler, 45, an experienced caver, collapsed unconscious in a narrow passage about 50ft down. Twenty volunteers, including mine rescue teams, police divers and fire crews, worked through the night in an attempt to bring him to the surface.

Explosives were used to widen the narrow gap to reach Mr Fowler, who could be seen by rescuers, while cavers used hand chisels to chip away rocks. They worked on even when it was clear that the man had died.

Mr Fowler and another potholer had been exploring caves above the River Taff near Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales when Mr Fowler blacked out.

His fellow caver went to the surface to raise the alarm.



Peter Fowler: blacked out in narrow tunnel

West Brecon cave rescue team member Gary Evans, said: "We had to use every method we could think of because there was very little room to move and conditions were extremely muddy."

A post-mortem examination is to be carried out next week by a Home Office pathologist, although police suspect he died from natural causes.

Man killed at son's wedding

By RUSSELL JENKINS

A BRIDEGROOM'S father was hit and killed by a car as he videotaped his son's wedding reception in the village of Over Alderley, Cheshire.

David Swift, 54, a retired lecturer, from Witke, Surrey, was trying to find a good angle from which to film his son Robert, 25, and his bride, Rebecca, 28, leave for their honeymoon. He stepped back into the Macclesfield Road with the camera to his eye as the wedding party emerged from a restaurant, and was hit by a car.

More than 20 guests, including his wife, Jane, saw the accident. One of the wedding party, a nurse, and a passing paramedic tried to administer first aid but Mr Swift was pronounced dead on arrival at the Macclesfield District General Hospital.

Inspector Paul Jennings, of Cheshire police, said that no charges had been laid over the accident.

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Brown letter drove Wilson to 17 drafts

Newly released papers throw light on Labour's troubles 30 years ago. Reports by Valerie Elliott

HAROLD WILSON was so bitter about the way George Brown quit his Government that it took 17 drafts before he could agree the traditional prime ministerial letter produced when ministers resign.

A document released today under the 30-year rule shows the many deletions and hesitations by Wilson about what he could properly say about his former Foreign Secretary.

Antimosity had been building between the two and, amid a gold and sterling crisis, the final straw for Brown was the discovery that he had been excluded from a Privy Council meeting on the night of March 14, 1968, that agreed to order an immediate bank holiday to stem losses in gold and to freeze dealings on the foreign exchanges.

News of the meeting, held at Buckingham Palace, reached Brown at the Commons: he met colleagues to discuss the development.

Wilson was furious that Brown had held such "an irregular meeting" outside the Cabinet. An emergency Cabinet was called at 1.15am.

Cabinet committee minutes released today show that Wilson in vain emphasised to Brown that he had tried to contact him for over an hour by tel-

ephone. In the end the meeting had gone ahead with just the Prime Minister, Roy Jenkins, the Chancellor, and Peter Shore, Economic Affairs Secretary, who made up a quorum.

The secret conclave incensed Brown, who believed it was symptomatic of Wilson's style of government.

Anthony Crosland, President of the Board of Trade, also objected, saying that other economic ministers should have been included. Shore accepted that the episode showed the secrecy of the Treasury.

Brown would not allow the discussion to move on and insisted he had never been out of telephone reach. He accused Wilson of handling the crisis "with great arrogance".

But Wilson defended his action, saying the full economic picture had not been made clear to him until 11pm. Brown hit back that Wilson and Jenkins "had acted by themselves and on their own authority".

Michael Stewart, then First Secretary of State, rebuked Brown and Crosland and said the situation "was too serious for ministers to waste time arguing about procedure".

Brown, however, was baited: he was adamant he had not been telephoned and ac-



Wilson: row over emergency meeting

used Wilson of "trying to cover up a monumental muddle". He then departed from the Cabinet. Crosland said that nobody could blame him for his action but Wilson found it unacceptable that Brown had doubted his word about attempts to contact him.

Brown, who had long been threatening to quit, wanted his exit to be memorable. In his resignation letter he publicly criticised Wilson's style of government: "The events of last night and this morning have brought to a head a really serious issue which has, as you know, been troubling me for some time. It is, in short, the way the Government is run and the manner in which we reach our decisions."

Wilson was angry that a colleague should behave like this in such a crisis, and decided to challenge Brown's version of

events. A first draft of his reply read: "I cannot agree that the events... Justify the general conclusion you seek to draw from them."

He also suggested that other Cabinet ministers were "unanimous" with the decisions taken. But, given that four of the Cabinet had expressed concern, Wilson deleted the line.

Further attempts were more conciliatory: "You refer to the events of last night. As you know the most strenuous efforts were made to get in touch with you at a critical phase so that you could be brought fully into the picture."

Again Wilson had second thoughts, crossed out "most strenuous efforts" and wrote "I tried unsuccessfully to get in touch with you."

Yet this was clearly too personal for Wilson after the manner of Brown's departure. In the end he wrote: "unsuccessful efforts were made to get in touch with you."

In an early version he also wrote: "It is a matter of great regret to me that you now feel unable to continue in the Government." But he authorised a subtle change. "I am sorry that your feelings about what happened last night have made you decide that you cannot continue to hold office in the Government."

Wilson even hesitated over whether to praise Brown for "his great contribution" to the Government. In one version the words are crossed out, but they appear in the final draft.



George Brown, for whom the euphemism "tired and emotional" was coined

Minister quit over 'that bitch' Barbara Castle

DETAILS of the resignation of Ray Gunter, Harold Wilson's minister of power, reveal extraordinary tensions and class warfare that were rife inside the Cabinet.

Mr Gunter quit as a minister in a late-night telephone call to Mr Wilson at Chequers, claiming he could not stand "the middle-class bastards" inside the Cabinet.

His main target, however, was "that bitch" Barbara Castle who had been given a version of his old job as Minister for Labour in a reshuffle three months before. He could not understand why she had landed his job and clearly resentment had built up. Last night Lady Castle was not available to comment on the acrimony.

Mr Gunter, one of the lesser-known ministers of the Wilson era, spoke frankly to the PM in a highly emotional call at 11pm on June 29 which was listened into and noted by the Downing Street Duty Clerk. The nature of his bitterness is recorded for the first time in new files at the public record office.

Mr Gunter told Wilson he was walking out of the Government "to fight against the bloody middle class and intellectuals within the Cabinet".

A South Wales valleys boy with strong union links — he was the only minister on strike in 1966 — he hated the government's approach to the Nationalised Industries and

Labour relations generally. Still hankering after his old job, he did not think Mrs Castle was doing it properly and he "could not stomach this".

His mood had no doubt blackened throughout the day. He had tried to resign at 10am that morning but Wilson refused to accept it. But conversing through the duty clerk, he was adamant he would not stay on in the post, and refused to go and see the Prime Minister at Chequers.

The duty clerk recorded that Gunter spoke "in a brusque, almost strangled voice".

Wilson asked if they could remain personal friends but Gunter said there was no friendship. He accused Wilson of destroying the Ministry of Labour and of destroying him, of "kicking him hard" and of suspecting him of leaks. "You suspect me! Torture me!" he railed, and said he wanted to know why he had been kicked out of his job.

Gunter said he intended "going back to the people whence I came", adding "where the miners are, the shunters are and the railwaymen are, that is where I am". Wilson told him to have a stiff drink and sleep on it but he resigned the next day.

Publicly Gunter made no reference of his disagreement with Wilson but he told reporters "they will be asking you the hell I am in ten years' time."



Gunter resented his job going to Castle in Cabinet shuffle



Plus ça change in politics

By PHILIP HOWARD

BEHIND the public face of government lie paranoia, secrecy, malice and panic. They always have. And the public records of 1968 show that old Labour was much the same as new Labour (and Conservatives of whatever age) in its cruelties and class wars, with their vendettas and projects.

So we overhear Ray Gunter grumbling about "middle-class bastards" in the Cabinet, anticipating John Major on some of his colleagues. Gunter also called Barbara Castle "that bitch". His observations were gratefully provided to posterity not by a television microphone which he thought

was off the record, but by the official telephone exchange.

That summer the Government dithered a second devaluation, which would have finished it. We hear of Operation Bruns, a plan (devised, of course, by economists) to prevent Britons from holidaying abroad, and to stop French wines being imported. George Brown walked out of the Cabinet in a fit of pique, and the Prime Minister was so terrified at the threat to his Government that he made 17 drafts of the customarily disingenuous letter accepting resignation.

It was the high tide of the Sixties, with hippies, marches,

and protests against the Vietnam War. The Archbishop of Canterbury opined that the Remembrance Day parade had become out of date. The young seemed such peaceniks that Dr Ramsey suggested a service of universal penitence.

The human weaknesses behind stately facades should be no surprise. They have made rattling good fiction from Sir Humphrey Appleby to Dickens. In his own version of Operation Bruns, Shakespeare made immortal the mixture of revenge, public stonewalling and private folly. It comes as a cheerful reminder that our Caesars are like the rest of us.

Memories are made of this

1968 WAS THE YEAR THAT...

- Labour's "I'm backing Britain" campaign took off
- Common Market countries removed last customs barriers
- Seven-sided 50p coin replaced ten shilling note
- Sir Leane Constantine became first black life peer
- Richard Nixon elected President of United States
- The Beatles set up Apple boutique, a £100,000 psychedelic shop in London's West End
- New legislation stemmed flow of Asian immigrants from East Africa
- Violent anti-Vietnam War demonstrations in London
- Southeast England hit by worst floods since 1953
- Two-star post introduced: first class and second class
- First British heart transplant at National Heart Hospital, Marylebone, by team led by Donald Ross
- Reggie and Ronnie Kray arrested
- Jackie Kennedy became Jackie Onassis
- Minister reached such heights that cleaners charged by the inch



Wade: historic win at the US Open

AND IN THE ARTS...

- Cool Day Lewis became Post Laureate, a post vacant since death of John Masefield in 1967
- The musical Hair premiered in Britain, after abolition of stage censorship by the Lord Chamberlain
- The Forsyte Saga drew huge audiences for the new BBC2
- Till Death Do Us Part (BBC) was the most popular television show with 15.1 million viewers
- At the Oscars, Katharine Hepburn (The Lion in Winter) and Barbra Streisand (Funny Girl) shared the best actress award. Oliver! won best film
- Alexander Solzhenitsyn's novels smuggled out of Russia
- Best-selling albums included Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, Delta 7, Tom Jones, Operation: Hot Gone Fused by the Small Faces, Val Doonican Rocks Me Gently, The Sound of Music, Bookends by Simon and Garfunkel, and Love Andy by Andy Williams

SPORT

- Britain won five gold medals at the Olympic Games in Mexico
- England and Yorkshire last bowler "fiery" Fred Trueman announced his retirement
- Virginia Wade beat Billie Jean King to become first British woman to win US Open
- Tony Jacklin became first English golfer to win a tournament on the US tour — the Jacksonville Open — for more than 20 years



Armstrong: shy about retiring

QUOTES OF THE YEAR 1968 — what not seek and I will not accept the nomination of my party as President," Lyndon Johnson

"As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see the River Tiber flowing with much blood," Sir John Peel

"Musicians don't retire, they stop when there is no more music in them," Louis Armstrong

"It is unbecomingly let a cardinal to say badly," Pope John Paul II

"Let us begin by committing ourselves to the truth; to see if the it is and to tell it like it is, to find the truth, to speak the truth and live with the truth. That's what we'll do," Richard Nixon's acceptance speech for presidential nomination

ARRIVALS

- Lisa Marie Presley
- Jay Key
- David Betty
- Damon Albarn
- Jason Donovan and Kylie Minogue

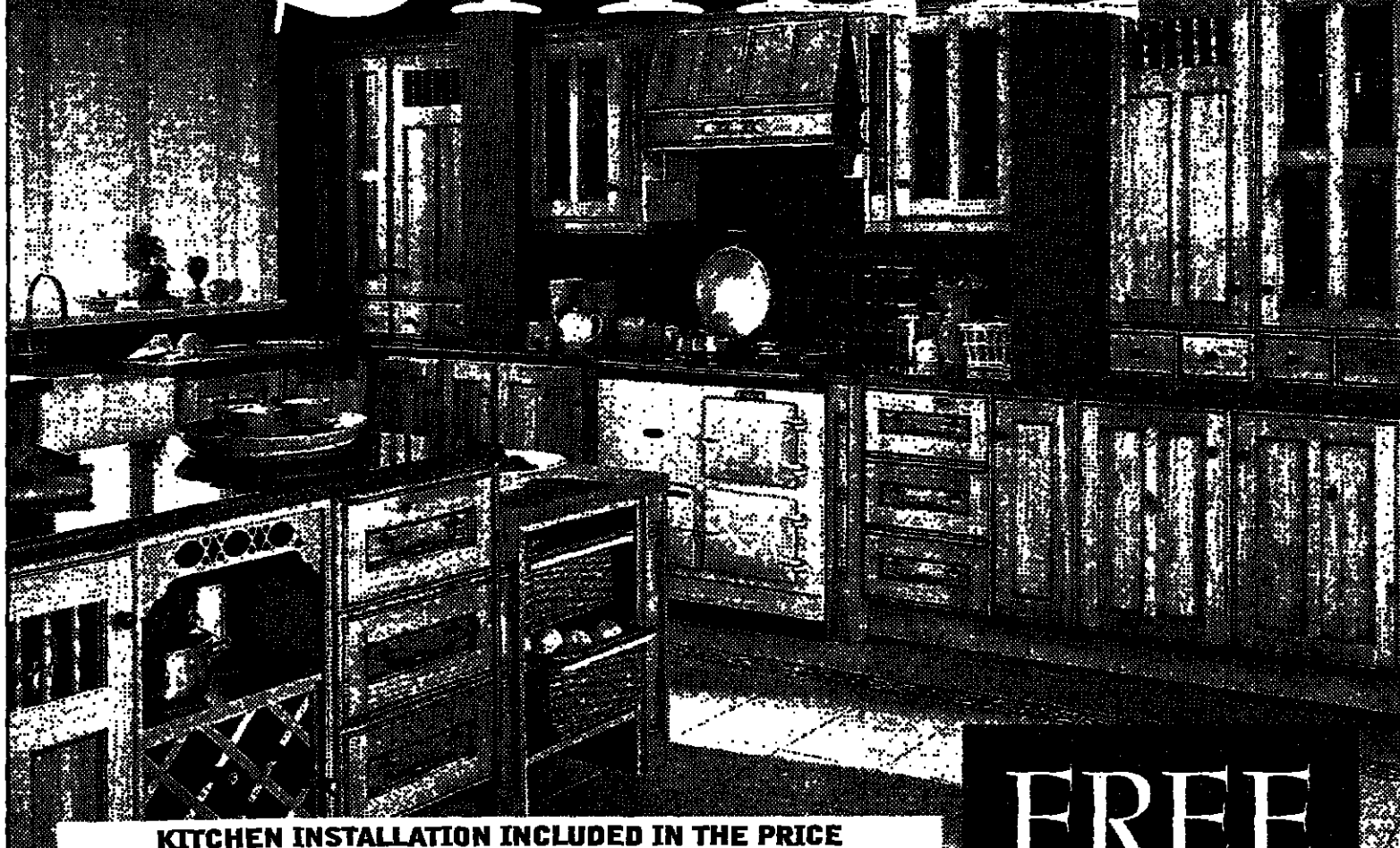
DEPARTURES

- Robert Kennedy
- Eric Syron
- Martin Luther King
- Yuri Gagarin
- John Steinbeck
- Bud Flanagan

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TECNIK T1062L	INTEGRATED FREEZER	£509 £392
TECNIK T1060L	INTEGRATED WASHING MACHINE	£449 £339

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Queen saved Remembrance Day

The Queen blocked a Church plan to make Remembrance Day less militaristic. At a time of Ban the Bomb slogans, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Michael Ramsey, argued that many people found the Cenotaph service "distasteful" and that the young were not "parade minded".

In the year that marked the 50th anniversary of the Armistice, he suggested a new multifaith service dedicated to peace and self-sacrifice in all walks of life "and not only in the battlefield". He wanted to include an ele-

Valerie Elliott on moves to abolish wreaths and military involvement

ment of penitence for national shortcomings that had contributed to the world's troubles.

In a confidential report to James Callaghan, then Home Secretary, he also suggested that it was time to change the name of the service and said that the date and the 11am silence should be up for debate. The confidential report noted: "There is something to be said for a day when

better weather than November can be expected, and at a time when more people can act concertedly than at 11am." All the wreath laying, except by the Queen, would also be cut out.

The move was immediately opposed by the Queen who believed the public would be unhappy and not understand such a change. Phillip Allen, Mr Callaghan's private secretary, reported: "For those of Her sub-

jects (and they are still numerous) for whom it has a meaning, it stands. She believes, purely as the annual public recognition of those who gave their lives for their country in the two great wars of this century."

He added that the Queen accepted there may come a time when the ceremony had little public interest and "is inclined to think that when that time arrives it might be well to consider

abandoning it altogether". The official believed that the Queen's opposition, probably shared by Commonwealth countries, made the Archbishop's plan impossible.

The Prime Minister was even more forceful. In a note scribbled in green ink on a Downing Street briefing paper, Mr Wilson wrote: "We should have to have strong evidence of a desire for change - since any variation, especially omissions (eg wreath laying) might cause heart-burnings and the feeling that we were 'forgetting'."

British cities faced 20,000 Hiroshimas

RUSSIAN atomic weapons targeted at Britain during the Cold War had 20,000 times the capability of nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima, intelligence documents brought to light under the 30-year rule reveal.

The "top secret" documents marked "for your eyes only" were accepted by ministers and defence chiefs as realistic assumptions for emergency planning. London would have taken the brunt of a nuclear attack with eight megatons of weaponry directed at the Government's control centres such as the Ministry of Defence.

Glasgow, Birmingham and Liverpool would also have suffered huge destruction with four megatons of missiles directed at each city. The government satellite "spy" listening centre, GCHQ, was also expected to be a prime target for the Soviets who had a two megaton missile directed towards the Gloucestershire town.

A total of 399 megatons of Soviet nuclear weaponry was targeted at Britain. In comparison, 20 kilotons were dropped on Hiroshima.

The cities listed as most vulnerable for attack were Cardiff, Manchester, Southampton, Leeds, Newcastle, Bristol, Sheffield, Swansea, Hull, Middlesbrough, Coventry, Wolverhampton, Leicester, Stoke-on-

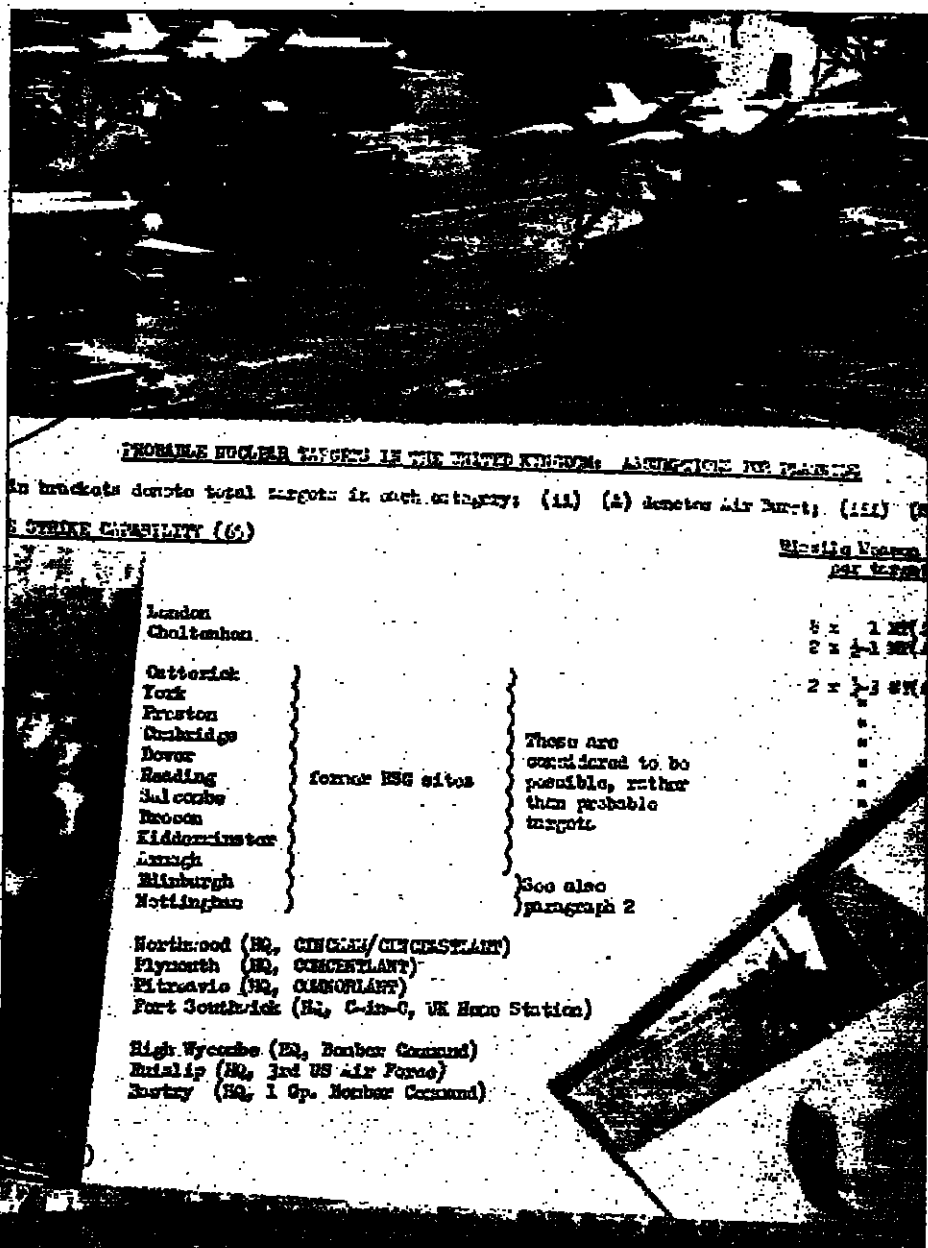
Trent, Belfast, Edinburgh and Nottingham. All RAF bomber bases and communication centres were also key targets, as were Polaris submarine bases.

Within a few months of the secret intelligence being circulated to military commanders, the Foreign Office took action to curb the spying activities of staff at the Russian Embassy in London. Michael Stewart, the Foreign Secretary, told Harold Wilson on September 28, 1968, that the numbers of Soviet diplomats had risen from 64 to 80 in four years, of which 62 were spies.

A third of the 95 non-diplomatic staff were also known to be intelligence officers and the Soviet trade delegation had 28 spies out of 180 staff. Britain had only 40 diplomats in Moscow.

Wilson gave orders to freeze the Soviet numbers after one of his officials noted on Mr Stewart's top-secret report: "These figures are truly monstrous."

The sending of Christmas cards to Russia was threatened by the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Michael Stewart, the Foreign Secretary, favoured crossing their leader, Alexei Kosygin, off the list but was overruled by Harold Wilson, who said: "It seems petty. We have not broken off diplomatic relations."



Cities, bombers and Polaris submarine bases were among possible nuclear targets

And the chargé d'affaires played on

IT WAS a classic example of British stiff upper lip. Outside the Beijing mission an angry mob was baying for blood. Inside Donald Hopson, the chargé d'affaires, and his staff were playing bridge and sipping claret.

It was August 1967, during the Cultural Revolution, and the Chinese Government had summoned Hopson to demand the release of Chinese journalists imprisoned in Hong Kong and the lifting of bans of three communist newspapers.

Hopson refused. In a memorandum to the Foreign Office recounting the events that followed, he recorded his sense of foreboding. "I took the opportunity to put the signed photograph of the Queen, as well as portraits of my wife and daughter, into the safety of the strong-room," he wrote.

The next evening the mission - with eighteen men and five women inside - was besieged by a mob of thousands. Sir Donald organised a rubber of bridge while other staff watched a Peter Sellers film, *The Wrong Arm of the Law*.

Eventually the crowd broke through and the staff were subjected to assaults and humiliation before being taken to the safety of the international diplomatic compound. There was Hopson noted, one saving grace: "The signed photograph of the Queen... survived, though slightly singed."

Argentina was almost given the Falklands

Harold Wilson was prepared to give up the Falkland Islands to Argentina and proposed a 20-year transition. The two governments came close to agreement in secret talks in 1968 but they foundered because of the intransigence of the 2,000 inhabitants. One idea was for Welsh communities in Patagonia to be enticed in a publicity campaign to promote the virtues of life under Argentine rule. George Brown, the Foreign Secretary, made clear that nothing could proceed without a referendum of islanders. Without one, Britain said it would be for Argentina to persuade the islanders of the advantages. The transition period was intended to be long enough to allow the older generation to disappear from the scene. Younger islanders were said to be more receptive.

CND 'communist threat'

The Government was warned by MI5 that communist agitators were planning to infiltrate the annual CND Aldermaston march after the Grosvenor Square riots in 1968. Documents show the deep fears triggered within the Establishment by violent anti-Vietnam war protests that March in Grosvenor Square. There was a widespread fear that the next catalyst for "revolutionary" violence would be the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's Easter march on the Aldermaston weapons plant, even though the event had no history of violence.

Lords reform blocked

Tony Blair was not the first Labour Prime Minister to face a struggle to reform the House of Lords - and William Hague was not the first Tory leader to have difficulties with his own peers on the issue. Harold Wilson - who was engaged in delicate negotiations with Tory peers to avoid a lengthy constitutional battle - was so concerned about leaks that he called in MI5. He became so exasperated with what he saw as a deliberate attempt by Tories in the upper house to bring down his Government that he contemplated abolishing the Lords altogether.

'Rivers of blood' fears

The Government feared that Enoch Powell's "rivers of blood" speech on immigration would undermine race relations but Sir Elwyn Jones, the Attorney-General, decided within four days of the May 1968 address that the Conservative MP should not be prosecuted. Cabinet disliked the extreme views of Powell, right, but noted: "Unless the [immigrant] influx can be greatly reduced there will be a very real risk that our efforts to create a multiracial society... will fail."



Police wanted cover-up

Harold Wilson's private secretary raised fears that the Prime Minister's security was threatened by the miniskirt. Such was the climate of fear after the assassination of Robert Kennedy that No 10 expressed concern that police patrolling Downing Street could not keep their eyes off the mini-skirted girls who walked near St James's Park. Skirts were so short that even dry cleaners cashed in, charging twopence an inch for cleaning. Security men also banned Wilson from installing a colour television in his Commons office, fearing that it could be bugged.

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You would start on a three-step process to gradually reduce the nicotine level in your body, helping you to stay calm and in control all the way. It works like this: the NiQuitinCQ patches come in three nicotine strengths.



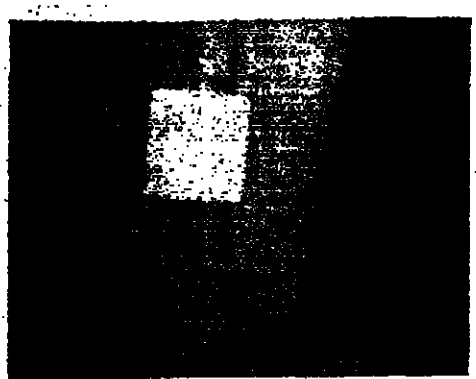
You start with the highest strength patch and then you step down to a lower strength patch, and finally to the lowest strength of all - 'till you are free of the need' (if you smoke less than 10 cigarettes a day you start with the middle strength).

CALMING THE CRAVINGS.

On the morning of the day you decide to quit, you apply your first patch (probably best on your upper arm).

Within seconds of application NiQuitinCQ will start to deliver a controlled, and steady stream of replacement nicotine to your system. The new NiQuitinCQ patch is the only patch with a patented rate controlling membrane so this 'steady stream' continues for a full 24 hours until you wake the next morning, when you apply your next patch.

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But in spite of overcoming the worst problems associated with the physical withdrawal symptoms of nicotine, many people still go back to smoking. It is their smoking habits that cause this - the psychological reaction to certain situations that tells them to reach for a cigarette.

New NiQuitinCQ sets out to help you overcome this psychological need. It offers you the free NiQuitinCQ 'Committed Quitters' Stop Smoking Plan. This is a personalised plan designed to work with our

three-step patch process to give you the support necessary to stop smoking permanently. Inside your first pack you'll find an invitation to join, and a free-phone telephone number for you to call.

FREE NIQUITIN CQ "COMMITTED QUITTERS" STOP SMOKING PLAN.

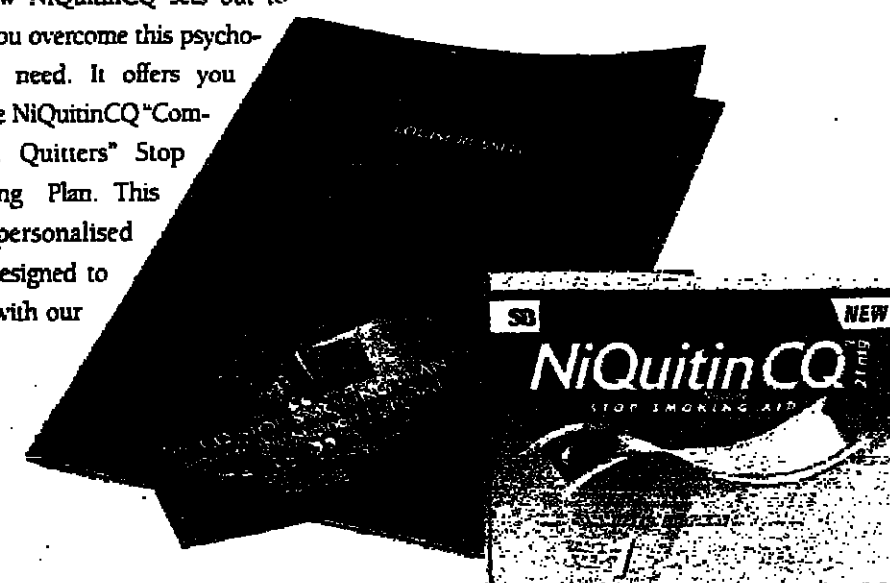
Written by some of the world's leading experts in smoking psychology, this personalised plan is based on a series of carefully designed questions we'll ask you when you call the free-phone number on your invitation.

After this private conversation - and only after listening to you - we will prepare, and then print a plan specifically for you. Your personalised plan will then be posted to you so you get it within one or two days. This plan is tailor-made to help you overcome your particular smoking habits.

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Why not find out more? Consult your local pharmacist and ask them about NiQuitinCQ, the only patch with a personalised support plan.

P.S. If you are seriously thinking about giving up, cut this page out and keep it. Good luck.



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Detective Sergeant Bryan Redshaw with the Bramleys' car, which was found in York. Right: the children's coats

New lead in search for fugitive parents

By Russell Jenkins

POLICE are hoping that the discovery of a car belonging to a runaway couple who vanished with their two foster daughters will be a breakthrough in their hunt.

Detectives have been searching for Jeffrey Bramley, 34, and his wife, Jennifer, 35, since they disappeared from their home in Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, four months ago with Jade Bennett, 5, and her sister, Hannah, 3.

The couple, who had been turned down as permanent adoptive parents of the two children, vanished on the day they were due to hand them over to social services.

They are believed to have been wandering between holiday resorts, bed and breakfast hotels and caravan sites. In



Jeffrey and Jennifer Bramley: withdrew all their savings

spite of widespread publicity, including a major appeal on the BBC's *Crimewatch UK*, there have been no confirmed sightings.

The car was discovered last Tuesday when a member of

the public called police to report the vehicle abandoned near his home in the Scarcroft Hill district of York. The Honda Concerto, registration number G152SHR, contained some of the missing girls'

clothes, their car seats and other documentation. It had been parked at the spot for five weeks.

Detective Sergeant Mark Nicholson, of the Cambridgeshire Constabulary, said: "After nearly four months we have finally had a major breakthrough in our search for this family."

"We will now be closely examining the vehicle and hope its recovery will give us further clues as to where the family is now."

"The area where the vehicle was found is made up of a mix of residential homes and bed and breakfast and guest house accommodation. The family, of course, could still be in the area and we would urge anyone who recognises them to come forward."



Jade Bennett, left, and her sister, Hannah, have been missing for four months. Police fear for their wellbeing



Police believe that the car, which has four new tyres, may have had work carried out on it at a garage in the York area. "We would like to appeal to owners of bed and breakfast accommodation and also to commuters. The vehicle was found a short distance from the railway station," Sergeant Nicholson said. Mr Bramley,

a postal worker, and his wife, who have no children of their own, were hoping to adopt the two girls.

They had been caring for them since March and last September they learnt that social workers had decided they had "inadequate parenting skills" to adopt the girls perma-

nently. Such is the level of concern about the children's wellbeing that Mrs Justice Hogg, of the High Court's family division, made a public appeal for help in November, saying that she was concerned that their health and educational needs were not being met.

Since that time there have been reports of sightings in Norfolk, Sussex, Buckinghamshire and the Irish Republic but none have been confirmed.

Police said that the Bramleys had withdrawn their savings before vanishing and believe that they may soon run out of cash.

Army finds proof of weaker sex

By Our Medical Correspondent

WOMEN soldiers are at least three times more likely than men to suffer stress fractures during basic fitness training, according to a study published today in the *British Medical Journal*.

The report's authors, from the Royal Hospital Haslar, in Gosport, Hampshire, noticed a fourfold increase in referrals for injuries between 1994 and 1996 and wondered if it had anything to do with the Defence Ministry's equal opportunities policy introduced in 1993 which subjected women to the same rigorous exercise as men.

They studied bone scans of all the recruits from the Army Training Regiment in Winchester, Hampshire, referred in 1995-97 and found 4.2 per cent of men suffered stress fractures compared with 14.2 per cent of women.

Migraines triple young women's risk of a stroke

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

YOUNG women who suffer from migraines are 3½ times more at risk of a stroke. The danger increases if they smoke, take oral contraceptives or have high blood pressure.

Researchers from the Radcliffe Infirmary at Oxford and the Imperial College, London, School of Medicine studied the cases of 291 women aged 20 to 44 who had suffered a stroke. They found that among 40 per cent of patients with a history of migraines, the stroke occurred during a migraine attack.

They also found that a family history of migraine, irrespective of whether the patient suffered from it, increased the risk of a stroke. A quarter of the women who had a stroke suffered from migraine and another 26 per cent had some-

one in their family with the condition. In women with a prior history of migraine, up to 73 per cent had a headache within three days before the stroke, compared with 31 per cent of women who had never suffered from the condition.

The study, published in the *British Medical Journal*, says that oral contraceptives were already known to be an independent risk factor for strokes, especially among women over 35 who smoke or have a history of hypertension. The link with those who also suffer from migraine has not previously been noted.

Low-dose oestrogen pills were safer than those with a higher dose but the researchers say that it was not possible to calculate accurately the interaction between the contraceptives and a stroke.

New Year honours

The following details were omitted from the New Year's Honours list details in some editions of *The Times* yesterday.

CBE: G N Phipson, headmaster West Hatch HS, Essex, services to the Assn of Headteachers of Grant Maintained Schools.

MBE: A Hutchinson, lately Principal Lighthouse keeper, Fair Isle (South) Lighthouse, Orkney, services to marine safety; Mary-Grace, Lady Hutchinson, services to the Community in Melton, Suffolk; Sister M K Hyland, services to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Glasgow; R G Ingham, services to deaf people in Lincolnshire; C A Ingham, senior messenger, Home Office; B Ingle, boxing trainer, St Thomas Boxing club, Sheffield, services to disadvantaged young people and to boxing; M E Ingle, services to Anglo-Japanese trade links; Mrs M A Iverside, services to the fostering of children on Guernsey; Mrs C A Cockerill, services to the Citizens' Advice Bureau in Cambridgeshire; Mrs D Cockett, services to the Friends of St Thomas' Hospital, London.

CORRECTIONS

An article (November 25) implied criticism of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, for his "failure" to back away from the Queen after presenting to her the speech at the state opening of Parliament. The proposal to cease the practice of stepping backwards from the throne was made by the Queen herself.

□ The Munich agreement was in September 1938, not 1936 as incorrectly stated in a report (December 3). The then Lord Cranborne had at that time already left the Government, having resigned the previous February, together with Anthony Eden, over the appointment of Mussolini.

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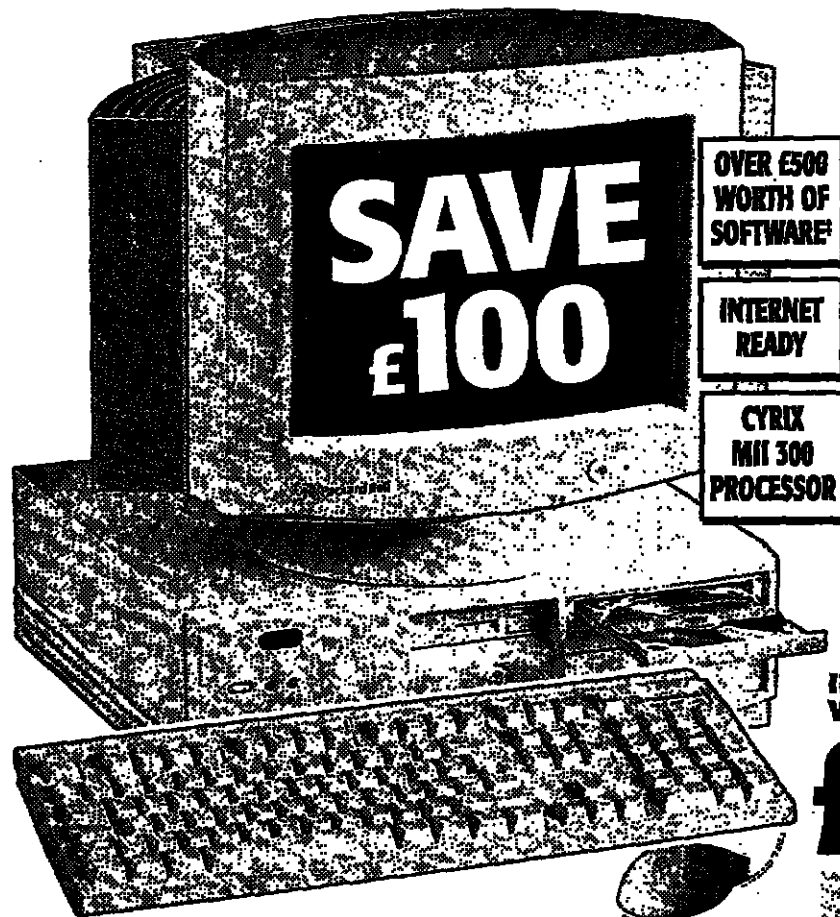
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Hostages forced to change their stories

Daniel McGrory in Aden reports on claims that a Yemeni 'whitewash' seeks to absolve soldiers of blame

SECRET police yesterday forced a survivor of the Yemeni hostage massacre to change his testimony about how his wife died in the bungled rescue attempt, to remove any suggestion that Yemeni troops fired the fatal shot.

Laurence Whitehouse said that he had reluctantly altered his written statement after he and his fellow survivors had been interrogated for several hours.

"I just want to take my wife home to be buried. I don't care what version the Yemenis want to believe," he said.

But Mr Whitehouse dismissed as "pure fiction" the finding of a post-mortem examination carried out in Aden yesterday that his wife, Margaret, had been shot at point-blank range by her captors. Other survivors also spoke of their disgust at the attempted "whitewash" by their rescuers.

David Holmes, who was beside Mrs Whitehouse during the shootout between their captors and security forces, said that he had no doubt that the advancing troops shot her.

"The Yemenis are telling complete and utter lies. And this was a shameful way to treat a man who has just lost his wife," he said.

Before the nine British hostages began their journey home last night they were told to fill in questionnaires from the Yemeni secret police, which included "evaluating the success of the rescue operation". Mr Whitehouse, 54, from Hook, Hampshire, said: "I wrote 'Four dead, 12 survived'. It speaks for itself."

Mr Whitehouse then had to

wait his turn in the stifling restaurant of the hotel at which the survivors had been kept for three days to be cross-examined on his answers. He had written that when his wife fell to the ground with half her face torn away he had shouted to their captors: "You have killed my wife."

"The Yemenis liked that expression but I added 'the bullet could have been anybody's'," he said. "The colonel questioning me did not like that bit and asked me to delete it."

Mr Whitehouse was standing with his hands in the air two yards from his wife, who was nursing Andrew Thirk, another hostage, when Yemeni soldiers charged the ridge on which they were held at gunpoint as human shields.

Trembling as he spoke, Mr Whitehouse said: "They shouldn't be using my wife's death as a political football. The culpability was the terrorists. They kidnapped us, they used us as human shields. There can't be any greater culpability than that."

The issue of who fired the bullet is irrelevant to the loss of her pupils, her hundreds of friends feel. I have lost a wife of 27 years."

Hussain Arab, Yemen's Interior Minister, insisted yesterday that the army was ordered in only after the Al-Jihad kidnappers threatened to execute a hostage every hour.

That contradicted the original claim by General Mohammad Saleh Turaki, Aden's security chief, that three of the captives were executed before the raid began. The hostages



Holmes: "Yemenis are telling complete lies"

say that they were never threatened.

The general presided over the questioning of the survivors yesterday. He refused to accept a typed statement, agreed by all the survivors, which is believed to be critical of the rescue operation. An aide said that four hostages changed their statements under questioning to say that the terrorists fired first. When questioned by journalists, the group unanimously agreed

that the shooting was too far away to say who fired first.

David Pearce, Britain's deputy ambassador to Yemen, said: "We did not know they were going to use force. We were not consulted and we would never have condoned that use of force." He said Britain was demanding to know why the raid was ordered, as well as a fair trial for the leader of the kidnappers, Abdul Hassan. An FBI investigator arrived in Aden yesterday amid reports that Al-Jihad was funded by Osama Bin Laden, the Saudi billionaire living in Afghanistan who was allegedly behind bombings at US embassies in Africa.

Yemeni opposition leaders claimed that the Government had known before the kidnapping that the 400-strong Al-Jihad was running a terrorist training camp in the area but had done nothing.

Before leaving Aden the survivors visited their injured friends, Margaret Thompson and Claire Marston, whose husband, Peter Rowe, was killed.



Laurence Whitehouse, right, is comforted by Chris Cheesman, a fellow survivor, as they leave Aden yesterday

Scientists keep an ear open for ET

By Nick Nuttall
TECHNOLOGY
CORRESPONDENT

THE most advanced search for intelligent alien life is to be launched by British and American scientists using the Jodrell Bank radio telescope to screen out interference from the Earth's own radio and television signals.

The scientists will be listening for signals in a band called the "water hole" which lies between 1,420 MHz and 1,600 MHz, or between the frequencies of hydrogen and oxygen. Like a water hole where disparate animals gather, this is the area of frequency where aliens could hope to communicate across the miles of space.

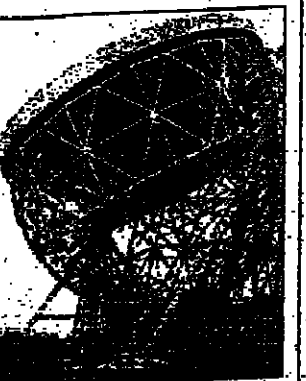
Previous searches have used a single radio telescope to listen for suitable signals. This has led to errors due to interference from spy planes and broadcasts on Earth. Now Jodrell Bank is linking with a Caribbean telescope to allow researchers to dismiss rogue signals more swiftly.

Ian Morison, the engineer and radio astronomer co-ordinating the British end of the research, said that when the Arecibo dish in Puerto Rico picks up a suitable signal, it will be relayed to Jodrell Bank which will be listening on the same bit of sky from Cheshire.

If the signal is really interference from within our solar system, the exact same signal will be detected by both telescopes. If the signal is coming from a solar system far away, the frequency Jodrell Bank detects will be slightly different.

The two telescopes, whose work is being funded by the privately backed SETI Institute in California, have made some preliminary searches. But the Arecibo telescope suffered some damage late last year as a result of Hurricane George.

The real work begins in March. Mr Morison said that he was keeping an open mind about possible findings.



Jodrell Bank able to distinguish ET from TV

NEWS IN BRIEF

Boy falls under van wheels

A boy aged three was critically ill after falling from a van and being run over by the back wheels. Jake Lloyd was with his brother Jordan, 6, in the passenger seat when he opened the door. The van was driven by their cousin, David Weller, 20, who was returning the boys to their home in Reading after a family party. The boy was taken to Great Ormond Street Hospital. Police are to question Mr Weller and the injured boy's brother.

Death charge

Two men were remanded after the death of a boy aged 7, hit by a stolen taxi in West Belfast. Steven Sweeney, 25, and Paul McCusker, 27, were charged with hijacking and Sweeney alone with causing death by dangerous driving.

Omagh concert

The pop group Boyzone are to perform in Omagh this weekend in aid of victims of the bombing atrocity. Members of the chart-topping band will also meet survivors of the blast during their day-long visit to the town tomorrow.

Last journey

A taxi driver and a woman passenger died when the vehicle was crushed by a lorry on the M25 in Buckinghamshire. The woman aged 34 was going from Heathrow to spend New Year's Eve with family in Chorleywood, Hertfordshire.

Ancient saddle

Archaeologists have found a medieval saddle in a dig near the old city walls of Carlisle, Cumbria. The decorated leatherwork, believed to be about 500 years old, was well preserved by the waterlogged ditch in which it was found.

£800,000 tome

A famous 17th century book on flowers, *The Mollie Florilegium*, which had been lost for nearly 150 years, is expected to fetch up to £800,000 at Christie's in London in March. It contains more than 200 flower paintings on vellum.

Gecko discovery

A British student has discovered a new species of gecko during a trip to the South Pacific. Julia Jones, 21, an ecology student at Cambridge University, found the 16cm-long lizard among rocks on Mont Igambani in New Caledonia.



Surprisingly ordinary prices



EUROPE'S NEW CURRENCY

Bubbly and balloons for the EU baby

FROM CHARLES BRENNER
IN BRUSSELS

IN KEEPING with the seasonal spirit, a jolly cartoon stork was used by the European Union yesterday to herald the arrival of the baby euro, along with the new year.

But the Brussels ceremony smacked far more of a wedding, replete with champagne, emotion, forced speeches, poor jokes and a family spat.

There was a nuptial feel about the solemn yet festive manner in which ministers, the British ambassador, the Commission President and the Central Bank governor gathered in the pink granite palace of the EU Council to confer their collective blessing on monetary union.

After all the years of rehearsal, sacrifice and bickering, the relief was palpable when the ministers, in the role of best men, popped the corks of their salmanazar bottles of champagne and toasted the mass matrimony of the lira, escudo, peseta, three national francs, two marks, guilder, schilling and the Irish pound.

A little over-emotional, Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the Brussels Monetary Commissioner, shocked the guests by threatening to spray them with bubbly in the style of a victorious Formula One driver.

Outside in the courtyard, children, decked from head to foot in the blue and gold of the European flag, counted down from dix, neuf, huit... to un and released 3,000 balloons into the grey Brussels sky for



the benefit of the television cameras.

"This shows everything is going to become prosperous," said Jean-Louis Fourmy, the man from the Brussels balloon firm, who complained that he had been charged a special balloon-launching tax by the Belgian authorities.

In the distance, a gaggle of anti-euro demonstrators from The Netherlands chanted their disapproval of the single currency.

But first had come the euro ritual, in which the officials calculated the rates at which the 11 currencies would lock together and dissolve themselves into the new at midnight. The rates were disclosed when Jacques Santer, the President of the Commission, in an avuncular mood, pulled a curtain from an illuminated scoreboard. The Italians shed an arithmetical tear

as 1,936.27 lire became a single euro.

Like all weddings, the vicar, in the shape of Wim Duisenberg, the dry-humoured Governor of the European Central Bank, reminded the congregation that the union was irreversible. Then followed the oratory, in which the ministers competed with lofty metaphors to convey the emotion of the occasion.

"We are standing at the dawn of a new era in history," said Rudolf Eisinger, the Austrian Finance Minister and the outgoing EU finance chairman, setting the tone.

Minister after minister invoked history and added a national twist. Carlo Ciampi, for Italy, gave a taste of Rome's relief that the lira had not been jilted. "Italian money is no longer national. Today it becomes European," he beamed, adding that Italy now wants even closer union.

The Finnish minister spoke of his country's joy at being part of the euro union. Like the rich father of a bride espousing a poorer partner, the Germans sounded warnings on the need for thrift and effort, adding a swipe at Britain on fiscal misbehaviour. The effect was diminished by the fact that the sermon was delivered by Werner Müller, the Economy Minister, in the absence of Oskar Lafontaine, the Finance Minister, who preferred to stay home with his family.

Denmark, which is staying out of the euro, surprised the gathering when its minister proclaimed her conviction it



European Union finance ministers and officials mark the unveiling in Brussels yesterday of the fixed rates of currencies against the euro

would soon join. Portugal was thrilled to be part of a monetary giant, its minister said.

True to form, France offered the most lyrical address. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the minister, invoked the dreams of Victor Hugo and ended "Vive La France en Europe!" Also keeping wedding tradition, "Uncle" Jacques Santer paid homage to the euro's illustrious but absent grandparents, in the form of Jacques Delors, the former Commission Presi-

dent, the late François Mitterrand of France and Helmut Kohl, the former German Chancellor.

Britain, the troublesome outsider at the festivities, offered a characteristically jarring note when Sir Stephen Wall, the Ambassador to the EU, eschewed the historic tone in favour of a questionable joke. Tony Blair, he recalled, had presided over the "longest lunch in the history of the EU" when the leaders had squab-

bled over the appointment of Mr Duisenberg at their Brussels summit last May.

Yesterday's euro lunch had been one of the shortest, Sir Stephen said. "Perhaps we can converge on a central rate for lunches in the EU," he added, producing strained laughter. Sir Stephen declared: "We wish it every success."

The euro family tiff came from the sparring match between Mr Duisenberg and France. The Dutchman has up-

set Paris by proclaiming this week he has no intention of stepping down after only four years in the eight-year post at the bank in favour of a Frenchman. The arrangement was brokered by Mr Blair in March as a way of appeasing President Chirac's desire to have the job immediately for his country. Mr Duisenberg again asserted his independence yesterday, however, earning a stinging riposte from M Strauss-Kahn, who said

Mr Duisenberg would be breaking his solemn promise. □ Rome: The Italian Government presided over the minting of its first euro coins yesterday, but Rome postal workers spoiled the festive launch by announcing a strike in protest at being inadequately equipped to work with the currency.

Paul Sykes, page 16
Leading article
Letters, page 17
Business News, page 40

Praise for Briton who charted currency course

THE oddest sight at yesterday's ceremonies to launch the euro was of a senior, but largely unknown, British civil servant, being offered a standing ovation by all the finance ministers of euroland (Charles Brenner writes).

Sir Nigel Wicks, 58, the Treasury's international director, was being hailed for his outstanding work over five years as chairman of the EU monetary committee, the secretive body of national officials that has led the technical preparations for the euro.

Since 1993 Sir Nigel, who is standing down this month and who was awarded the

MAN WHO MADE IT HAPPEN

GCB in the New Year Honours, has earned the esteem of EU finance ministries with his skill in steering the project through the uncharted waters leading to its creation.

The paradox of a British official at the helm of the finance committee has long worn off in the EU world, where he has wielded great influence in the decisions that shaped the euro.

Sir Nigel, who guards his privacy with the tenacity of the model Whitehall man, became a power in the EU after helping John Major to negotiate Britain's opt-out from mon-

etary union at the Maastricht summit in 1991. Since 1993 the Cambridge graduate and former BP executive has commuted regularly to Brussels and other EU capitals from his home in Guildford, attracting little public recognition except for his nomination last autumn in a much-publicised list of the 300 most influential people in Britain.

Although seen initially as a Euro-sceptic, Sir Nigel took to the nuts and bolts of building the single currency with such enthusiasm that French, German and other officials have treated him not as an agent of

the outside camp, but as one of their own. "He has made damned sure this thing works," said a senior French official.

Yesterday, Sir Nigel blushed and looked at the table when Rudolf Eisinger, the Austrian chairman of the finance ministers' council, said: "On behalf of the council, I want to express our admiration and deeply-felt gratitude. Thank you very much Sir Nigel Wicks." The council broke into spontaneous applause. German speakers noted that Sir Nigel was the only participant whom Herr Eisinger had not addressed with the intimate *Du*, sticking with the formal *Sie*.



Wicks led preparations for monetary union

Regular travellers will enjoy benefits of new bank accounts

MANY banks have launched euro accounts already in response to customer demand (Karen Woolson writes). People who will benefit from opening a euro bank account are those who travel regularly within euroland whether on business or for pleasure. European property owners may also benefit from a euro bank account. Shares: Holding shares on the Continent may be easier with a euro bank account. Anyone with a connection in euroland, such as family in Spain, or who plans to retire or study somewhere in the zone could

INVESTMENT

also benefit from opening a euro account. Credit cards: Transactions on credit cards and debit cards in euroland will be quoted both in the euro and in the local currency. Cater Allen Bank has just launched a euro-denominated Visa card in conjunction with a euro bank account. The card allows customers to pay in the new currency without incurring any foreign exchange transaction charges. Euro-friendly plastic cards and accounts are expected to become commonplace within

the first year of the euro's inception. Dual pricing: From today the local currency of each participating country will be fixed to the euro. So if, for example, you drive to the French Riviera and then go to the Dordogne the week after, the exchange rate between the euro and the French franc should not vary at any point during your holiday. Price comparisons: It will be easier to remember one exchange rate (the euro against sterling) rather than the 11 different local exchange rates around euroland that eventually will disappear anyway.

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هكذا من الإلهام

Numbers game hits City screens

metra Mayor of Frankfurt, has been lobbying hard to make his city competitive with London as a financial centre. Her marketing slogan is: "Frankfurt's not large, but it's great". A euro celebration suggests that the City of London needn't be too nervous. Fran Rot will be watching the party on television — she saw no reason to come back from holiday for the launch celebration.

Despite the new left-wing tide across Europe, Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, and his cabinet have left their partners in no doubt that Bonn aims to use its turn at the EU helm to assert German interests, especially over EU finances. Setting the time for a presidency packed with deadlines for reform, German ministers hailed the birth of the single currency as a leap to a new

The German insistence on bringing tax rates closer into line

Currency strategist Jane Foley: "Most people are expecting the euro to strengthen, but I don't agree"

'There is no surprise, no drama and that's the way we want it'

a new picture, deleting the German mark, the lira and the rest and replacing them with a single euro line.

Bonn presidency to push for closer political union

Despite the new left-wing tide across Europe, Gerhard Schröder, the German Chancellor, and his team have left their partners in no doubt that Bonn aims to use its turn at the EU helm to assert German interests, especially over EU finances. Setting the tone for a presidency packed with deadlines for reform, German ministers hailed the birth of the single currency as a leap to a new

The German insistence on bringing tax rates closer into line jars with

While no one is seeking uniform rates, the Germans, with backing from France and most of the other nine states in euroland, are determined to end the big discrepancies between tax regimes on business profits, savings income and energy use. Their first target is to close European "tax oases" such as Luxembourg and

The break with the conciliatory style of Helmut Kohl and other past German leaders is setting the scene for fights over imminent big EU decisions. Rather than brokering compromise on common ground, Bonn is not flinching from stirring up trouble. The chief area is the new six-year spending plan, a fiendishly complicated package that will encompass re-

to fill one of these posts but no plausible names are in circulation. Because northerners have held the top Brussels jobs in recent years, the current favourites for Commission President are southern politicians, including Professor Romano Prodi and Lamberto Dini, both former Italian Prime Ministers, and Antonio Guterres, the Portuguese Prime Minister.

Creeps, shocks and the dreaded h-word

NEWS from the European Union in 1999 will be dominated by a mammoth squabble over who pays what for running the Union and its £30 billion annual farm subsidies. To cut through the jargon *The Times* offers a glossary of eurospeak:

- **euroland:** 11 states adopting the single currency. Population 300 million.
- **euro-11:** council of finance ministers, expected to emerge as virtual economic government of euroland.
- **pre-ins:** countries "not yet" in the single currency, namely Britain, Greece, Denmark and Sweden.
- **euro creep:** the increas-


correction: what Germany wants done to its £8 billion EU membership bill.

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¹⁰ The defendant's retail kitchen and bedroom shelves were seized between 22d November and 7th December 1978. When on April 23, 1980 on a kitchen purchase including insulation, Feltz discovered 1/2 lb more W/imped. A.J. 100% on April 24/80. ¹¹ On May 24/80, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827,

Clintons escape and hope the tide will turn

TOSSING a ball for Buddy, President Clinton strolled on the beach during a brief respite from his impeachment woes.

As his labrador romped in the surf, the President — in tracksuit and baseball cap — chatted to friendly tourists. Earlier his motorcade had driven past small groups of protesters, including one holding a large sign that said: "Feel our pain — resign now."

The Clintons are seeing in the new year as usual at the up-market resort of Hilton Head, off the coast of South Carolina. They have joined a crowd of other high achievers assembled for the annual off-the-record Renaissance Weekend.

One bright spot for the family was that Chelsea Clinton accompanied her parents to the retreat, contrary to a statement from the White House press office that she would not attend. In tacit admission of their troubles, Mr Clinton and his wife Hillary were not asked to conduct the question-and-answer session on New Year's Eve as in years past, at

Ian Brodie reports from Washington on new moves in Senate to avoid a full trial

which the impeachment issue was sure to have been raised.

"I thought there were more important things for them to address, so I didn't hassle them about it," said the Renaissance organiser, Linda LeSound Lader, wife of Phil Lader, US Ambassador to Britain.

To add to the Clintons' embarrassment, Americans doing their weekend shopping will see a blaring tabloid headline at supermarket checkout counters: "Hillary Beats Up Bill". This is the report in the *National Enquirer* that an infuriated Mrs Clinton, broken by the strain of her husband's womanising, hit him so hard

that she left a visible mark on his face and Secret Service agents had to separate them.

Despite the widespread visibility of the account, the White House press office continued to have no comment yesterday. Still, Mr and Mrs Clinton could take comfort that they remain top of Gallup's annual "most admired" poll of Americans and by a higher percentage than last year. He was named by 18 per cent of those surveyed, up from 14 per cent, and Mrs Clinton's rating doubled from 14 to 28 per cent. The Pope and Oprah Winfrey were runners-up.

While the Clintons were enjoying sunshine among old friends, snow was falling in Washington. The political climate, however, may be turning slightly less chilly. A paper was circulating in the Senate suggesting a swift test vote on whether the perjury and obstruction of justice charges against Mr Clinton warrant his removal from office.

Under this plan, prosecutors from the House Judiciary Committee would make a



President Clinton and his dog Buddy stroll on the beach at Hilton Head, South Carolina, where the presidential family is spending new year

brief presentation to the Senate followed by a White House rebuttal. Senators would then be asked to vote on whether the allegations, if true, would justify removing the President.

The idea is that the vote would prevent a long trial by demonstrating that the Republicans could not muster the 67 votes needed to dismiss Mr Clinton. The Senate would then take up

the proposal to reprimand him. Averting a trial did not sit well with Henry Hyde, the Republican chairman of the house committee, who said that the Senate's duty should

not be short-circuited: "We must not act so hastily that the Senate does not have a fair opportunity to review a factual record."

On the flight to South Caroli-

na, Mr Clinton ambled to the rear of Air Force One to collar Buddy. Reporters asked if he had made any new year's resolutions. "I'm working on it," the President said.

'Mayor for life' leaves with no regrets

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON



Barry: enjoyed life while Washington suffered

TOMORROW will be a day that many in Washington thought would never come — the moment Marion Barry finally steps down as Mayor of the American capital.

Once known as "mayor for life", Mr Barry, 62, was a disaster during most of the 16 years he held the job.

He padded the city payroll with thousands of patronage jobs, was incapable of fixing the simplest of municipal chores, and gained notoriety when an FBI sting caught him smoking crack.

Mr Barry was a night owl who cruised the city's clubs with his police bodyguards. He took junkies overseas. His name was linked to a variety of women. And all the while city services grew worse.

Eventually, Congress and President Clinton stripped him of power. Using their authority over the federal district, they created a control board to tackle the morass, including budget deficits, a dysfunctional city hall, inept schools and a scandal-prone police force. The board pulled

the city back from the brink and now its former chief financial officer, Anthony Williams, will be taking over as Mayor.

Mr Barry saw no evil at his final, wistful, press conference. "I've been a good mayor," he said. "I have no regrets." He vowed to write an autobiography to "tell my side of history". Authorities have begun an investigation into whether tens of thousands of dollars of city money were diverted to pay for a gala to celebrate Mr Barry's tenure.

US closes embassy in Tel Aviv

Jerusalem: The US Embassy in Israel was closed yesterday after an anonymous warning that a bomb would be detonated inside the offices in Tel Aviv (Ross Dunn writes). Edward Walker, the ambassador, ordered the closure on US security service recommendations. It is thought that an attack may have been planned by militant Islamic groups because of the US and British bombings of Iraq.

Mir comrades break open the cognac to wish the worldwell

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

COSMONAUTS on the Mir space station will be celebrating the new year — Russia's most important holiday — around a miniature artificial tree 250 miles above the earth.

This will be Sergei Avdeyev's third new year in space, and New Year's Day is both his 43rd birthday and his 500th day in orbit. He and Gennadi Padalka are not due to return to Earth until the end

of February at the earliest. Their tiny, decorated tree will add an air of seasonal splendour to the pair's New Year's Day satellite address. They will also have a midnight two-way celebratory link-up with their families to detract from the extreme isolation of life in space.

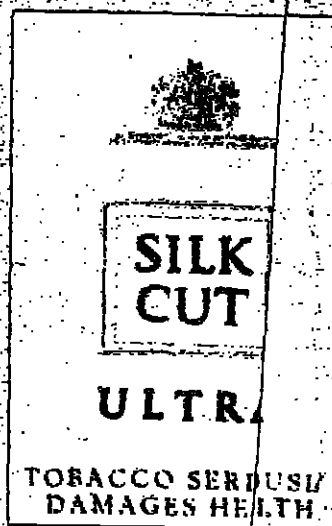
But Valeri Lyudtin, of the Flight Control Centre, says the two men will not be able to raise the traditional glass of Russian champagne to their loved ones because carbonat-

ed drinks are forbidden. "The little bubbles at out and get everywhere," says Theoretically, he adds, laughing, the men will not be drinking any alcohol at all.

In reality, it is new year and the crew Russian. In February 1995S astronauts on Mir were agged to see their Russian colleagues breaking out the cork after successfully putting out a fire on board. It is a fly kept secret that the Russians have drunk cognac in space since 1977.

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Son sues rail firm over Auschwitz

A JEWISH Frenchman whose parents were deported by train and murdered at Auschwitz in the Second World War is suing the state-owned French railway for alleged "crimes against humanity".

French railworkers of the Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer (SNCF) have been celebrated as Resistance fighters. But the lawsuit launched by Jean-Jacques Fraenkel, the first of his kind, has questioned that heroic image by claiming that the rail company collaborated in the deportations to Nazi death camps.

M. Fraenkel is already suing the State for "receiving stolen goods" — valuables taken from his parents — but he has extended the suit to include SNCF, which was nationalised in 1938. He claims that his father, a surgeon and holder of the Légion d'honneur, and mother, who became a Resistance worker, were taken to the death camps in French trains and the state rail company "collaborated in the deportations without any individual

The French state railway is accused of collaborating in wartime deaths, writes Ben Macintyre in Paris

or collective act of opposition". M. Fraenkel, 67, who also holds Canadian citizenship, acknowledges that individual railworkers performed acts of great heroism during the war, but he insists that the company did nothing to prevent the deportation of French Jews.

"There were, it is true, railworkers who were deported and shot, SNCF employees who resisted. But it should not be forgotten that there were hundreds of trains which transported Jews like so much freight to the concentration camps," M. Fraenkel said. "It must be officially recognised that the SNCF was one of the tools used by the Nazis to exterminate 80,000 French Jews."

The judge examining M. Fraenkel's claims against the State is also likely to take over the complaint against SNCF

which could face an avalanche of similar claims from Holocaust victims. "The SNCF knew the intolerable conditions these people faced on the cattle trains," M. Fraenkel said, pointing out that the company's bureaucrats organised the train convoys.

Roger Fraenkel, M. Fraenkel's father, was among 743 wealthy Jews taken to Auschwitz in 1941, soon after the Nazi occupation of France.

His mother fled to Nice, but was betrayed and sent to Auschwitz in 1943, leaving M. Fraenkel and his younger sister as orphans. The family apartment was looted under the anti-Jewish legislation.

"By operating trains of deported Jews using French staff, the SNCF took part alongside the French administration and other private com-

panies, in a crime against humanity," M. Fraenkel alleges in a lawsuit which the Paris prosecutor's office confirmed was "unprecedented".

The French railworker or chemist enjoys an almost mythical status. That is likely to be shattered if M. Fraenkel proves that the company and its wartime staff played a role in one of the worst crimes in history.

□ **Vietnam:** Holocaust survivor Simon Wiesenthal, who helped to track down and bring to justice 1,100 Nazi war criminals, celebrated his 90th birthday here yesterday with his wife Cyla and daughter Pauline.

Mr Wiesenthal was born in Buczacz, now in Ukraine, in 1908 and during the second world war was interned in a dozen Nazi German concentration camps before being liberated from Mathausen in Austria by US troops in 1945.

After the war he started his pursuit of former Nazi war criminals from his Jewish Documentation Centre. (AFP)



Father Giuseppe Puglisi, who was shot dead in 1983 outside his home in a poor district of Palermo, Sicily. The Vatican announced yesterday that the priest, who was a suspected Mafia victim, will be beatified during a ceremony this year

Papal blessings to cost 25% more

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

THE Vatican said yesterday that it was increasing by a quarter today the cost of the special papal blessings that are sold under licence to pilgrims in authorised shops around St Peter's Square in order to be able to devote more funds to the poor.

Archbishop Oscar Rizzuto, head of the Apostolic Alms Office which helps the Pope to minister to the poor, said the Holy See hopes that the increased price to the shops, 5,000 lire (£1.80) instead of 4,000 lire, would be borne by the retailers so that pilgrims do not have to pay extra for the spiritual souvenirs.

"The increase was decided because of the growing difficulty of coping with the ever greater number of poor people who ask for help from the Holy Father," he said.

The blessings are sold in the form of certificates bearing a picture of the Pope. Counter prices range from 18,000 lire upwards.

NEWS IN BRIEF

America to resume China rights talks

Beijing: America is to resume human rights dialogue with China, it was announced yesterday, despite Beijing's crackdown on dissent. The dialogue, discontinued in 1995, will resume based on initiatives from last year's summit between Presidents Jiang Zemin and Clinton, said a US Embassy spokesman in Beijing. In recent days, China has punished four high-profile democracy activists with stiff prison sentences and Ma Zhe, a dissident poet, was jailed for seven years on subversion charges.

The embassy would not comment on whether specific cases of jailed dissidents would be raised, only stating that "the agenda for the talks is still being negotiated". A Chinese delegation will travel to Washington to resume the talks. (AFP)

UN Angola staff leave

Luanda: The United Nations has started evacuating its staff from Huambo, Angola's second-largest city, after a rebel artillery barrage that killed at least eight people. The international Red Cross said 20 wounded civilians were admitted to hospital after an hour-long bombardment of the city by UNITA's long-range artillery. Thousands of refugees fleeing fighting in the countryside have converged on Huambo in recent weeks. (AP)

Australia wanted Bomb

Canberra: Australia, a vocal opponent of nuclear weapons proliferation, considered building up to 30 atomic bombs a year as recently as 1968, according to declassified Cabinet documents released by the National Archives. They show that John Gorton's conservative Government supported the principle of non-proliferation during the United Nations treaty debate as long as it did not block Australia's options to build a bomb at some stage. (AP)

Mob injures four nuns

Delhi: A boy takes part in a demonstration in the Indian capital against attacks on Christians and churches in the western state of Gujarat, where four nuns and two priests were earlier injured when mobs attacked a Catholic prayer hall. The attack was the tenth on the Christian community since Christmas Day, officials said. Christian activists blame Hindu extremists, but no one has claimed responsibility for the violence. (Reuters)

Child killings arrest

Bogotá: Colombia has reported the capture of Pedro Pablo Ramirez, suspected of murdering 29 children whose bodies were found in November in two ditches in the city of Pereira. Investigators were also trying to determine if he was involved in other murders of children that have taken place in recent years, officials said. Señor Ramirez was arrested using a false name in Pereira, 195 miles east of Bogotá. (AFP)

Bosnian Serb choice

Banja Luka: In an attempt to end a political deadlock, President Popasen of Republika Srpska, the Bosnian Serb territory, named Brane Milijus, right, a moderate, as Prime Minister-designate after a hardliner failed to win parliamentary approval. Mr Milijus is a member of the pro-Western Party of Independent Social Democrats run by Milorad Dodik, the current Prime Minister. The parliament must approve Mr Milijus. (AP)

Rebels beaten back

Freetown: West African peacekeepers beat back a rebel attack on the outskirts of the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown, driving them from the garrison town of Hastings, a spokesman for the peacekeeping force said. Residents fleeing the town, 12 miles from the impoverished former British colony's capital, said that the rebels had attacked overnight. Earlier, the Government denied that rebels were in control of the northern region. (Reuters)

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As warm as a pickled pepper



Slope off in style and comfort: Snow + Rock has concentrated on a range of snug and sensible suits, and the pink Killy, £379, is a classic

There is something intensely comforting about skiing with a group of friends who wear the same ski-gear every year. Since we last skied together, bombs have been dropped, politicians have encountered banana skins and trauma has gripped the City, but as we head for the first lift in Val d'Isère next week, we will look pretty much the same as we did last January. It is like entering a loop in which time stands still.

Displaying scant regard for the vagaries of sporting fashion is also a good excuse for making a ski-suit last at least a decade (as the Prince of Wales has obviously concluded). No one would be able to pick you out on the slopes if you changed hue, you claim, so why swap the battered burgundy one-piece for something less faded? The chums are an obliging lot and at least one of them will slap you warmly on the back and insist that they wouldn't recognise you in any other colour.

So you put to the back of your mind the obvious truth that there

Warm, windproof, long-lasting — and good for posing. Penny Wark searches for the perfect ski suit

are two ways to recognise friends at a million paces. I prefer to think that it is my soignée appearance that makes me identifiable, but secretly I know that it is skiing style (or lack of it) that enables companions to pick me out from 50 others hurtling down La Grande Motte. Colour is the secondary factor.

Nevertheless, it is with some reluctance that I have come to accept that the Head suit bought on impulse during a former life is past its prime. The moment of truth came last year when I realised that in spite of vests (one sleeveless, one long-sleeved), long johns (two pairs) and all manner of poloneck tops, I was still numb with cold. I invested £70 in a delicious Elder fleece top and matching long johns, which could not have been tastier (I have been wearing them at home ever since), but even these did not remove the need for a warmer outer layer.

The search began for something warm, windproof and waterproof, and with a reasonable pose factor thrown in. I wanted a one-piece, because, inconvenient as they are at lunchtime, they are extremely snug and, unlike jacket and trousers, they don't ever come apart.

I was also looking for a tall collar that would, when zipped up, come halfway up my face, sleeves that fall below my wrists, pockets to take credit cards and tissues without spoiling the line of the suit, and a rescue reflector. All that and a neat, simple design in a colour that will endure another decade without looking completely tragic.

If only it were that easy. I rapidly discovered that many of this year's suits fall into two categories: vile colours (do you really want to look like a banana?) and the pseudo-sporty effect that threatens to make you look like a teenager on heat. It is a look that is seriously incomplete

without a cavalier disregard for other skiers, and the ability to grunt "Dunno, wasn't me", or "I've dropped my gloves off the lift" at five-minute intervals. Not for grown-ups, in my view.

This is one of the traps that C & A has tumbled into this season. It may be famous for its skiwear but its current range will satisfy only youths or those, possibly with a fondness for *Saturday Night Fever*, who like to ski in Lurex. This, I admit, had never occurred to me.

But persevere and you discover that Snow + Rock has concentrated on snug and sensible suits — the Killy one-piece in pink (£379) is a classic, and I was particularly taken by the purse slotted on to its belt. The snag is the colour range: if you choose white, what happens when you lose a chunk of oil-drenched *chèvre chaud* down your front at

the first lunch? You buy another suit presumably. The same goes for a fabulous cream suit by Belle, trimmed in fake fur, at £329.

Tenson has a simple black suit at £269, and Brugi a red one with a fleece collar at a remarkable £129. But too many of this year's women's suits are laden with faux gold buckles and fastenings, and even fur.

At Lillywhites I was melting with desire at the sight of Bogner's exquisite ice blue one-piece, with its fur collar and cuffs, until an assistant explained that they were silver fox, which apparently justified the £1,500 price. I will learn to live without it on both counts.

I found my suit at Canyon Mountain Sports in Leicester. By Trespas, it is simple, warm, has a grey fleece collar and, at £99.99, was such good value that I felt obliged to ask what was wrong with it.

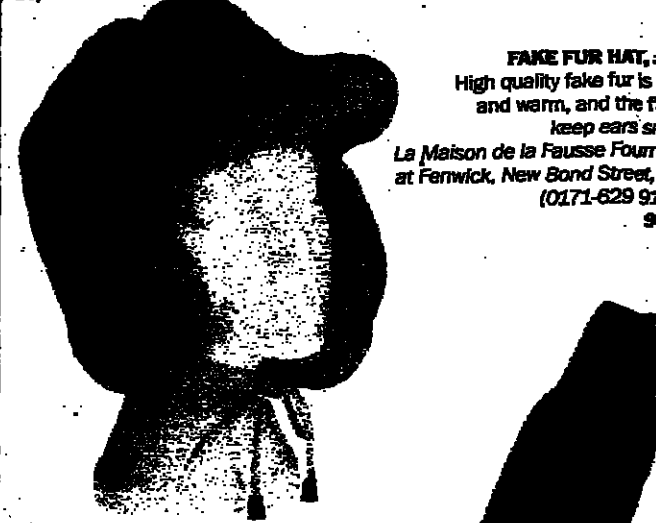
For my friends' information, it is red. "You look like a tomato," said one of the teenagers. When they grow up and learn to be tactful, they will realise that "red hot chili pepper" would be much more polite.

SIX OF THE BEST

Winter warmers



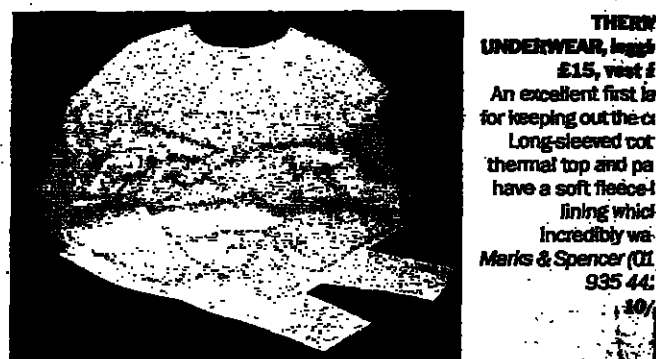
FLEECE GLOVES, £12
Thin enough to be worn (instead of silk gloves) under ski mittens and exact for those whose fingers always freeze.
The Gap (0800 427789)
10/10



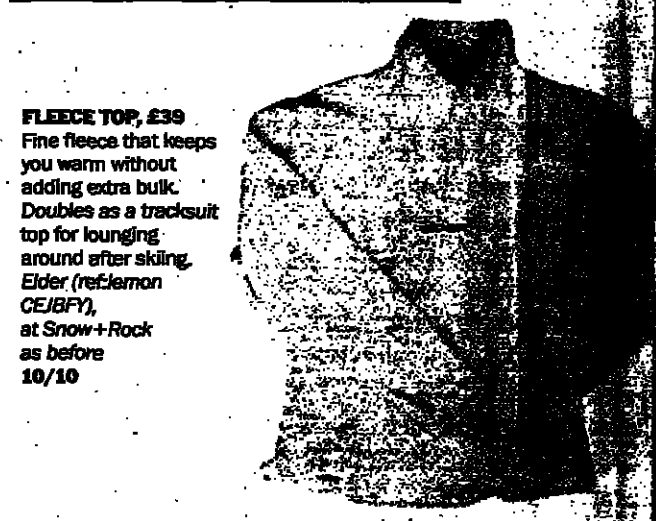
FAKE FUR HAT, £15
High quality fake fur is warm, and the fur keeps ears at bay.
La Maison de la Fausse Four at Fenwick, New Bond Street, (0171-629 9119)



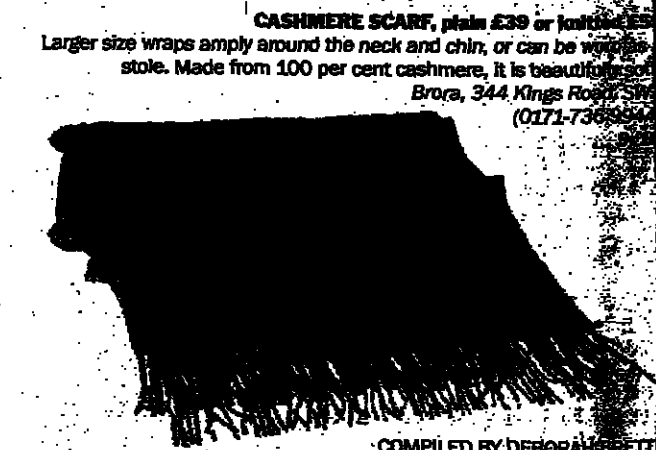
SNUG SKI SOCK, £15.95
Thermostat fibres give extra warmth, padding protects shins, and acrylic and Spandex enhances moisture ventilation.
Thorlo (ref: plum EASAXP) available at Snow+Rock (mail order 0845 0841000)
8/10



THERM UNDERWEAR, leggings £15, vest £12
An excellent first is for keeping out the cold. Long-sleeved top and leggings have a soft fleece lining which is incredibly warm.
Mavis & Spencer (0171-635 441)
10/10



FLEECE TOP, £39
Fine fleeces that keep you warm without adding extra bulk. Doubles as a tracksuit top for lounging around after skiing.
Elder (ref: lemon CEJBY), at Snow+Rock as before
10/10

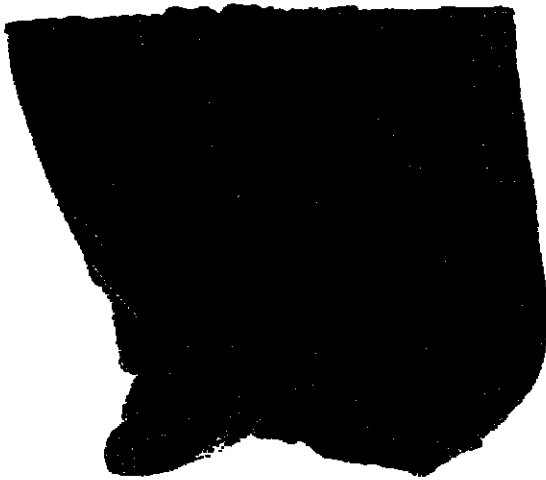


CASHMERE SCARF, plain £39 or patterned £45
Larger size wraps amply around the neck and chin, or can be worn as a stole. Made from 100 per cent cashmere, it is beautiful.
Bora, 344 Kings Road, (0171-734 5555)

COMPILED BY DEBORAH

Objects of desire

Keep your feet toasty with these knitted sock slippers. They come in frosty shades of sage and blue and can be worn under the sheets if your bed is cold, or as an alternative to the nasty nylon freebies you get on aircraft.
£16 from The Cross Catalogue (0171-221 8616)



This incredibly soft and chunky cashmere blanket may be pricey, but as indulgences go, it ranks with the best. Folding neatly in on itself to form a pillow, it is blissful for travelling or for snuggling up on the sofa.
£415 by Camire, available from MIMI, 309 Kings Road, SW3 (0171-637 1450)



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Zen and the art of blading

Mary Ann Sieghart promotes a perfect form of transport

For weeks I wobbled. Within a month I was morning. Now a whole year has passed, and I am almost an expert. It was for Christmas 1997 that my husband gave me a pair of Rollerblades. And ever since, I have enjoyed a lasting enthusiasm that happens also to be a brilliant mode of transport. Short of parading down Piccadilly, I can't imagine what could be more thrilling.

After dropping my children off at school in Victoria I can now Rollerblade to work in Wapping in 45 minutes flat. It takes only a little longer than the Tube. True, I can't read *The Times* on my travels. But what the Tube does not offer is glorious views of the Thames, fresh(fish) air, a feeling of exhilaration as you pick up speed and a great sense of achievement when you finally arrive, glowing and triumphant, at your desk.

This year's Christmas present is a Discman, so that I can listen to CDs while I skate. Dub reggae and funk are the best, as I send my blades whooshing to the beat. Forget jogging or the gym. This is that elusive discovery: a form of exercise that is actually fun.

It is as hard as it looks, to begin with. But, if you ever ice-skated or roller-skated as a child, your limbs already know the basic score. Stopping is a lot more difficult than starting: on my first foray on blades, I had to grab a passing lamppost and execute a couple of spins around it in order to prevent myself skidding into the traffic. Unfortunately the traffic happened to be a minibus full of policemen who fell about laughing at this ridiculous spectacle. The police driver turned on his loudspeaker and broadcast my humiliation to the world: "Have you got a licence for those, Miss?"

A lesson later, though, and I was beginning to get the hang of the blade. We bumped into Hugh Sackville, an Oxford physics graduate turned Rollerblading expert, teaching someone else in Hyde Park, and engaged him for a family instruction the next day. He showed us the various methods of turning, stopping and dealing with kerbs. And there was the constant reminder: "Bend your knees."

As with skiing, this is the most important, but also the hardest, instruction to remember. You instinctively straighten your legs when danger looms: you have to re-educate your reflexes. But this is not the only resemblance with skiing. At its best, on a smooth, flat surface with no cars or pedestrians and a beautiful view, you can work up a speed and a rhythm which give you just the same sense of euphoria as a really good run down a piste — for a fraction of the price.

I admit that Bournemouth is hardly St Moritz, and the après-blade leaves something to be desired. But, when I took my skates down there for the

Tory party conference, and set off on a crisp Indian summer's morning for an hour's exercise along a deserted promenade, I wondered why we had spent so much money on a trip to the Alps that spring. The beach was a many-mile-long sandy crescent, the sea was sequin-sparkling in the sun and the grassy hills surged up from the shore. No one else was about, save the occasional jogger putting far more work into his mode of transport than I, swooshing slickly past.

Few other forms of exercise can equal such elation. Skiing is up there. Galloping is great. And tacking close to the wind when a gust tips the boat almost perpendicular to the water, hits the spot too. But Rollerblading is the only one of these that you can do in a city, with minimal kit, at low expense. How many people can commute to work on skis, on horseback or in a dinghy?

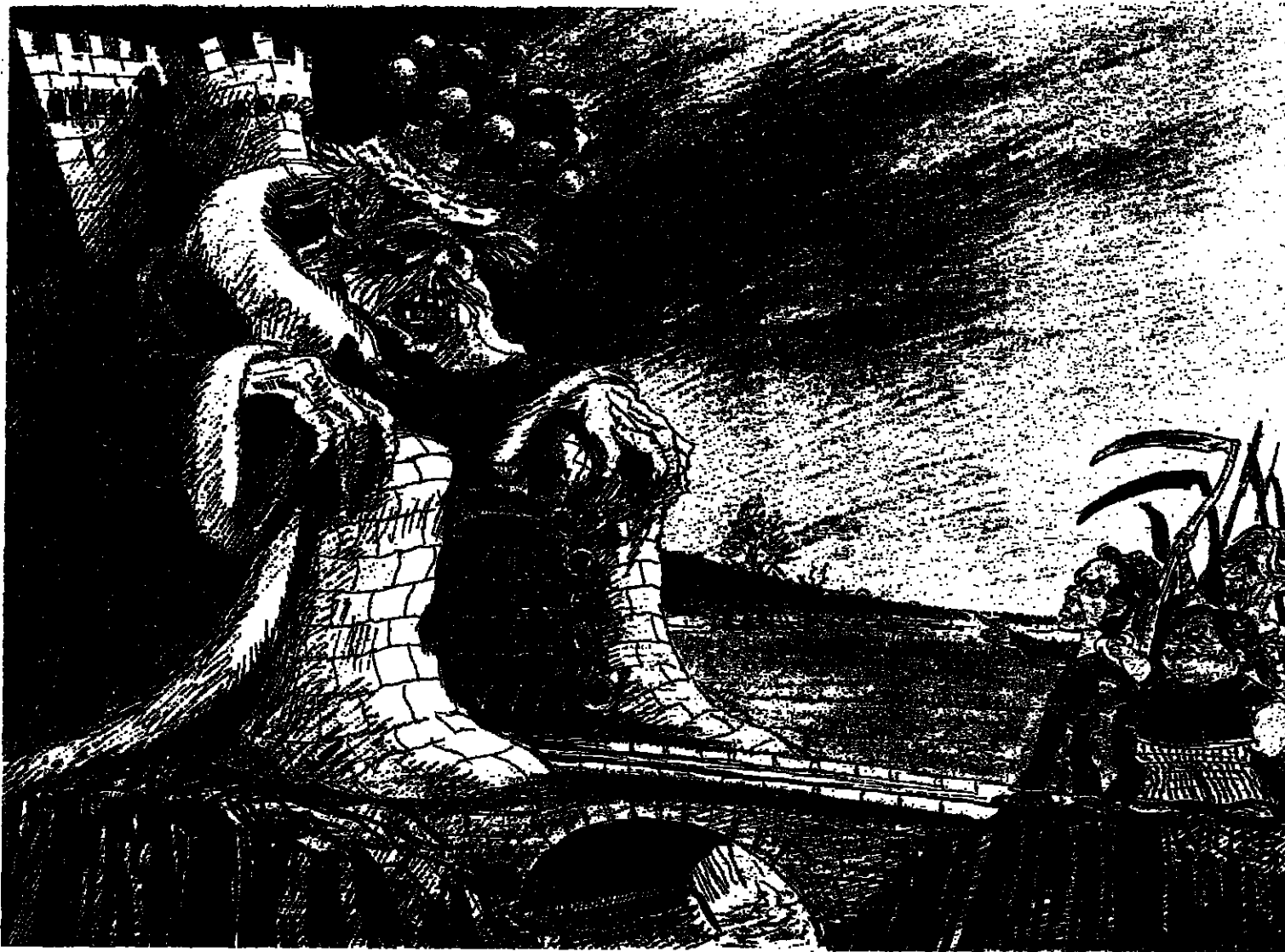
What is more, it gives you exactly the right amount of exercise. Riding and sailing may be fun, but they don't get you very fit. Jogging, on the other hand, is too much work; you feel you may collapse at any moment with a coronary.

Cycling is great, but dangerous in London, where buses and taxis try to make a kerb sandwich of you. Rollerblading is about as energetic as cycling but — relatively — safer. At any rate, you do it on the pavement, rather than in the road, and you wear protective gear. I have so far suffered nothing worse than a rather undignified graze to my chin. I have not yet bumped into a pedestrian; as long as you slow down, it is no more hazardous to others than jogging past them. But there is the endless hassle of kerbs, wonky paving stones and roads to cross. Except on a few stretches — the edge of St James's Park, the very occasional smooth section of the Thames Path — it is hard to build up the all-important rhythm and speed.

Our whole family goes Rollerblading at weekends. We have tried Battersea Park, we have tried Hyde Park, we have tried the riverside in Hammersmith. We have yet to discover that perfect Bournemouth-like nirvana where there is a long, even surface on which you can glide rather than judder (rough surfaces make your whole body vibrate, a feeling my daughter describes as "fizzy lemonade").

So I appeal to John Reid, the Transport Minister. This must be the most eco-friendly form of transport. It is silent, non-polluting and uses no energy other than our own. It does not clutter up the roads, as cycles do. And it is beautiful to watch. Please, Mr Reid, allow us a few long, smooth paths in London, perhaps alongside the river. Grant me my modest New Year's wish, and you can even call it an "integrated Rollerblading strategy for the millennium" if you like.

maryann.sieghart@the-times.co.uk



Lords on camera

Anthony Howard finds the BBC quaintly feudal in its approach to the filming of an outmoded institution

The House of Lords has in recent years done pretty well out of television. In a way, it has deserved to. The authorities there allowed the cameras in a full four years before they were admitted to the Commons; and in that strange, hiatus period — from January 1985 to November 1989 — the TV viewing public took quite a fancy to the courtly manners and stately rhythms of Lords debates.

Later on, of course, after the novelty had worn off and the regular coverage of actual proceedings became more intermittent, there were a few hiccups along the way. Their Lordships did not much care for — indeed, a number of them jumped up and down in anger about it — a *Cutting Edge* documentary shown on Channel 4 in 1992 which dared to suggest that some at least of them saw the exalted body to which they belonged as a convenient means of indoor relief.

Particularly regrettable in such eyes was the prominence the programme gave to an hereditary peer — a former bus driver from Brighton — who could hardly believe his luck in being able to scoop up something like £100 a day from his *per diem* allowance whenever the Lords was sitting. This unfortunate peer was also thought to have let the side down by wailing too lyrically on the delights of the tuck-shop — reserving his particular praise for the subsidised afternoon tea ("crumpets, muffins, tea, cake, something rather naughty with cream") served by motherly souls in the Lords dining room.

Almost equally unpopular was a *Dispatches* programme, again made for Channel 4, some three years later. This one went so far as to allege that one or two Noble Lords were "on the take" so far as outside lobbying interests were concerned. The charge was made before the full blossoming of the "steazie" allegations in the Commons, so it lacked the impact it might otherwise have had. Nevertheless, especially as the Upper House has rather laxer regulations in this area than now pertain in the Other Place, it did succeed in leaving a rather nasty taste — one that *Private Eye* has done its best to exploit with its recent running feature on "Lords for Hire".

It may, therefore, have been with mixed feelings that peers of all parties recently learnt that the BBC was preparing a series of three programmes under the collective

(and to some, no doubt, menacing) title of *Inside the Lords*. Having had an advance look at two of them, I can safely say that of two apprehensions can be laid to rest. Beautifully shot and marvellously evocative, this particular series would seem to have as its aim the preservation in aspic of a notably quaint and eccentric British institution.

No one watching the first two programmes would get much idea of the arguments currently going on over the future of the Second Chamber. Admittedly, Lord Richard, the former government leader in the Lords, is allowed to tumble away a bit about the anomaly of having

Courtly manners and stately rhythms preserved in aspic

while progressively widening the popular franchise for the Commons. Should have left the far greater democratic scandal of the House of Lords invulnerable and intact? It was certainly not what anyone expected at the time — even in 1832 it was generally assumed that, as an hereditary assembly, the House of Lords would be lucky to last a decade. Yet for the rest of the century the Upper House not only survived but flourished. Why?

The answer would seem to be that the hereditary peers genuinely did at that stage represent an Estate of the Realm — broadly, the landed interest. Towards the end of the century they were fortunate, too, in finding an improbable ally in W. E. Gladstone. From the moment he first embraced the Home Rule cause in 1885-86, driving out the great Whig families from the Liberal Party in the process and, as a consequence, turning the Lords into virtually a one-party chamber, he provided it with almost a licence to challenge the Commons. Even so, it took a good deal of brass-neck arrogance for the House of Lords in 1893 to defeat the second Home Rule Bill — already carried through all its stages in the Commons — by an almost totalitarian majority of 419-41.

The significant fact, though, is that it did so with impunity — and the House of Lords has since gone on to establish a pretty shrewd pattern of conduct over its choice of populist issues on which to confront the Commons. Yet it is hard to see even that as a sufficient explanation for its astonishing record of survival — at least since the Parliament Act passed under the Asquith Government in 1911.

In its preamble that first piece of legislation to put a bridle on the Lords gave a specific pledge that all hereditary peers would be removed from the Upper House "within the term of the present Government" — which, but for the First World War,

would have meant by 1915 at the latest. Yet, miraculously, the hereditary male element remained wholly undiluted — and totally undified by women — until 1958 when Harold Macmillan's essentially cosmetic Life Peerages Act introduced not only the "dayboys", as they characteristically came to be called, but — much more important — women, for the first time, into the Second Chamber. (Did nobody, one can't help wondering, think it odd that, while female MPs could sit in the Commons from 1918 onwards, not even hereditary peeresses in their own right were admitted to the Lords until more than 40 years later — and even then the first one of them was obliged initially to take her seat as a life peeress?)

The sad truth is that nothing so vividly illustrates the inertia principle at the heart of British politics than the way in which the Lords have successfully withstood reform throughout this century. After the Kaiser had enabled the hereditary peers to make good their escape from Asquith and Lloyd George, they faced only one other serious challenge. That came in the shape of the Parliament (No 2) Bill of 1969. The product of the inventive mind of Dick Crossman, this immensely complex and detailed measure never really stood a chance of getting on to the statute book — least of all when an unlikely alliance of Michael Foot and Enoch Powell resolved to fight it, line-by-line on the floor of the House of Commons. After consuming to no avail 12 days of parliamentary time, the Bill was eventually and humiliatingly abandoned by a Labour Government headed by Harold Wilson.

The next few weeks should show whether Tony Blair is made of sterner stuff. But the approach march to the battle has also revealed something else — that, despite all the changes made by Sir John Birt to its structure, the BBC remains an Establishment organisation at heart. Present its most talented film-makers with even the most antiquated and outdated part of our national fabric — and their automatic instinct will be to celebrate it with touchingly nostalgic pictures and deferential feudal echoes.

Inside the Lords starts on BBC2 at 8pm on Sunday.

comment@the-times.co.uk

Beware the euro yes-men

Paul Sykes calls for a frank debate on further unification

As the euro is launched into uncertain waters, those who wish Britain to participate in economic and monetary union are already making predictable noises about how we cannot afford to be left out for long. The language of urgency is being deployed to prevent rational scrutiny of a project that will have profound consequences for Europe.

It is no surprise that those who advocate the abolition of the pound are unwilling to deal with the matter candidly. The apostles of unification have often given the impression that the democratic process is, in the short term, an inconvenience to be circumvented and, in the long term, an inappropriate mechanism for decision-making in the new Europe. Hence Claude Cheysson, the former Foreign Minister of France: "The construction of Europe has taken place because of intergovernmental co-operation. We worked the normal democratic structures and that is why we succeeded."

Nor should one assume that such attitudes are confined to the other side of the Channel. Hugo Young's book, *This Blessed Plot*, is littered with examples of cynical evasions on the part of British politicians and civil servants in their efforts to propel us into an ever-closer union.

The only reason the British people are to be given the opportunity to vote on the euro is because John Major sought to buy off Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party as the 1997 general election loomed. Determined not to be outflanked on the European issue, Labour followed suit. What is proclaimed as a virtuous safeguard was, for Tony Blair, a necessary evil. How Peter Mandelson and other pro-Euro strategists must wish that Mr Blair had avoided giving that pledge. Without it, there is little doubt Britain would be far further down the road to full participation in EMU.

As the referendum approaches it is becoming clear it will be a truly momentous decision. The tortuous relationship between Britain and the supranational entity that, through mental laziness and intellectual sleight of hand, we have learnt to call "Europe" will come to a resolution. To vote "no" would create an almost insurmountable obstacle to further British participation in the grand project of European unification. The other EU countries would see it as justification for divorce.

Yet saying "yes" would undermine, perhaps fatally, the legitimacy of our domestic democratic institutions. If workers in my native Yorkshire found their jobs were disappearing because of the desire of unaccountable bankers in Frankfurt to prevent "overheating" elsewhere in the Union, they would demand action from their elected politicians. How would they react if their MPs told them there was nothing they could do? From this week interest rates are to be determined at an EU-wide level, for the supposed benefit of the European economy, and those charged with making such judgments cannot be sacked by anyone.

Soon tax will also be set at a European level, despite Mr Blair's protestations. Tax harmonisation is not only a logical development of EMU, it is the avowed objective of the Finance Ministers of France and Germany. Even income tax is on the table. Those commentators who insist that no one has even suggested a European income tax have obviously not been listening to the President of the European Parliament. Will the hard-pressed workers of Britain, white-collar and blue-collar alike, accept taxation without representation?

Issues of legitimacy and accountability stir deep passions. In Britain one can point to the introduction of the poll tax, the closing of the coalmines and the impact of Thatcherism on Scotland and Wales as examples of challenges to Westminster's right to lay down the law. It is impossible to govern without making hard choices and if these have a negative impact on people, it is vital that they accept the legitimacy of the politicians who have made the decisions and feel they can get rid of them. There is already resentment towards Brussels on the part of many Britons, even though only a small minority, notably our fishermen, have been harmed seriously by the EU.

The United Kingdom has the fifth largest economy in the world. We also have a functioning democracy that has survived many tribulations. No one pretends we don't have problems, but they are not remotely of an order to compel us to abandon self-government.

For too long, those who have sought, by fair means and foul, to secure British participation in the integration of Europe have been allowed to dodge the hard questions. Most of them know what they want — a de facto united states of Europe. If they have the honesty to declare that aim, we should respect their integrity while deploring their objectives and leave the British people to decide. However, should they choose to carry on with ever more implausible denials in the face of all the evidence, no quarter will be given.

The author is chairman of the Democracy Movement.

comment@the-times.co.uk

Support role

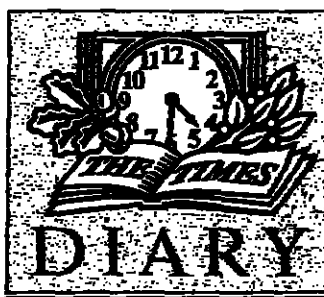
PETER MANDELSON has found solace with Kevin Spacey, the private Hollywood actor. I am delighted to learn. Wendy was first seen revelling in the company of Spacey, who has migrated from Los Angeles to the more delicate climes of London, at the rehearsal party of the *Old Vic* in October, and the two have been close since. My brother Owen noted in his diary that the duo hit it off splendidly, but at the time I wondered if he had been at my gin again. But now Notting Hill chums of Mandelson,



British newspapers devoted generous column inches to the shoot-out in Yemen, which lead to the death of three British hostages. The FT's headline on Thursday bristled with patriotic concern: "Four Germans freed in Yemen".

Manic mum

THE mother of the Duke of Edinburgh is to be the unlikely subject of a biography by Hugo Vickers, the royal author. Clearly



feeling brave, the Royal Family gave him unprecedented access to private archive material at Windsor, Broadlands and Darmstadt.

I just hope that the Duke likes the book. It will not be so discreet as obituaries, detailing how Princess Andrew of Greece, the sister of Lord Mountbatten, went into a Swiss sanatorium after a religious crisis. Nicknamed the "barney nun", she spent the last years of her life wandering around Buckingham Palace in grey monastic full-flowing robe and coil. Quite why this needs to be raked over all these years on, I have little idea.

Blue year

GAZING into my Waterford crystal ball, I see a year of comebacks, dastardly deeds and the odd strange vanishing.

Comebacks. Although his campaign to be London mayor has had its blips, Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare will see off sleazy Socialists and triumph. Alan Clark, a polymath in a party of pignies, will become leader of the 1922 Committee. My old friend Lord St John of Fawley will be dragged from his longed-for retirement to replace Stella McCartney on Tony Blair's Committee of Good. Dear old Lord Longford, so understanding about human lapses, will be appointed the Government's sleaze-buster. And "Lady" Arabella Russell-Sackett will be made a countess to stop the sniggers. Scandal will be provided by the PM — caught ducking into a



"What about me?"

Geneva clinic to have his simian line removed. Regular readers will remember that my disclosure about what crossed Tony Blair's palm caused unkind chorologists to suggest that the PM was shifty, egotistical and quite possibly autistic. As the PM has off-loaded all other dodgy old baggage, I entirely expect him to avail himself of a plastic surgeon.

Vanishing. The most amazing example will be the retirement from society of the delightful Father Michael Seed, Roman Catholic convert to the gentry, who will go off to meditate and boil stew in a Scottish croft. He will be replaced as aide to Cardinal Basil Hume by his friend Peter Stringfellow, who has a similar eye for publicity that will help to get the cardinal noticed. In the media, I predict more welcome vanishings for that old happy Polly Toynbee, whose Sixties witterings have surely had their day; for Taki, who has taken to invention in his rant in *The Spectator*; and of course Rosie Boycott. To everyone else, I send best wishes for a seriously swinging and scandalous new year.

RELATIONS between Americans and the Irish, normally so rosy, are strained at last. Sinéad Cusack (above), the Cork actress who shares Jeremy Irons's bed-chamber, believes she is being



discriminated against by Broadway. Starlets such as Nicole Kidman gain plaudits for working in the West End but strict American union laws prevent Cusack's countryfolk from wowing the Big Apple. "This is not sour grapes, but our own actors should be given an equal opportunity," protests Sinéad, suffering from tortuous foody metaphor syndrome. "It's all very well for those Americans being the cream in our coffee, but we don't want it all to turn to sour milk."

JASPER GERARD

The author is chairman of the Democracy Movement.

comment@the-times.co.uk

هكذا من لا أمل



PRIDE OF NATIONS

Britain will stand stronger for staying out of EMU

Today is a proud and historic day for Europe and, even more so, for Britain. In continental countries, governments and political philosophers have been dreaming for centuries about the creation of a unified European State that would stretch from Brussels to Brindisi, from Berlin to Bilbao. Today's launch of European economic and monetary union (EMU) which will transfer the most important economic functions of the 11 participating governments from the national to the European level, is not only the culmination of more than a decade of political commitment and economic sacrifice for the major European nations. It is probably the biggest step ever taken towards the ideal of a full-scale European union—at least by democratic, as opposed to military, means.

If EMU appears a success, which in practice will be judged by whether the introduction of the euro coincides with a substantial reduction in unemployment, the momentum for further integration among participating countries will receive a major boost. Economic developments in Europe will, in truth, be largely a function of global events and of decisions on deregulation and economic restructuring which still have to be taken at the national level. But if the introduction of the single currency does happen to coincide with the end of a decade of economic stagnation in Europe, the advocates of further integration are bound to claim vindication.

But even if EMU proves less successful, the initial effect may be to increase pressures for further centralisation. If EMU offers no salvation for Europe's unemployed—if, instead, it unleashes new waves of international competition and job losses—then Europe's politicians will naturally seek to deflect blame from the inherent flaws in the EMU blueprint, as well as from their own failure to undertake the necessary domestic restructuring. The

natural reflex of EMU's sponsors may well be to look for new ways of centralising economic decision-making at the pan-European level, beginning with Franco-German demands for tax harmonisation. Almost whatever happens economically in the next few years, therefore, European integrationists are likely to claim that EMU necessitates further steps towards full unification. In the long run, of course, it remains to be seen whether the disparate nations of Europe would submit quietly to the degree of centralisation and bureaucratic control implied by the EMU blueprint. But for the majority of continental politicians who are strongly committed to the long-term ideal of further integration, today's launch of the euro is a source of great pride.

The same should be true of Britain. Outside EMU Britain may rediscover its historic role as a great trading nation, deeply involved in Europe, but always independent and looking outwards to the rest of the world. Outside EMU, Britain will remain the world's fifth largest economy and a full member of the EU. Its pivotal position in the single market will be guaranteed not only by treaty but also by the fact that Britain will be easily euroland's largest trading partner. Like Sweden, and Denmark, Britain should continue to prosper as an independent country. And although, as EMU pushes Europe towards further integration, new arguments may arise for and against Britain joining, there should be no more economic or financial pressure on Britain to give up its independence than there has been on Canada to join the US, or New Zealand to merge with Australia. Britain's relationship with Europe cannot and will not be decided by businessmen and financial markets. It will be settled by British voters, according to their own judgments, and in their own good time.

GREEN SPROUTS

Rachel Carson planted the seeds of environmentalism

The flourishing of the Sixties may have brought free love and flower power and psychedelic ideals; but even as the age of the earth mother bloomed, a ripple of alarm was ruffling the grass, roots of society. Lackadaisical daydreams of living for the moment were pierced by the sharper realities of rapid industrial development. And, in the wake of the 1966 slag heap slip at Aberfan which buried a school, or the oil pollution caused by the stricken tanker *Torrey Canyon* in 1967, a youth movement was beginning to grow up and wonder what sort of legacy might be left to their offspring.

In 1962 Rachel Carson had published her fierce polemic *Silent Spring*. Marshalling empirical evidence of environmental damage done by chemical pesticides, she had exposed with steely authority the arrogance and folly of those who sought to conquer nature, disregarding the integrity of the natural world and the interdependence of all living things. The response of the Establishment was vigorous.

Carson's scientific credentials were impugned and her status as a childless, unmarried woman belittled. But as evidence of graver ecological damage kept coming in, public opinion remained stalwart. *Silent Spring* planted the seeds of an environmental movement which in the 1970s was to germinate and sprout into a mainstream political issue.

At first this Green movement spread by word of mouth among like-minded individuals, its ideals increasingly seeping out into broader society as the validity of its concerns became ever more apparent. In 1972 the classic report *Limits to Growth* was published, setting the agenda

for a survivalist stream of thought. Its conclusions were taken as evidence of a catastrophic fate awaiting man unless rising levels of production and consumption were curbed. Barbara Ward's *Only One Earth* called for a fundamental shift in human allegiances away from the family and the nation state to the planet itself.

In 1972 Barbara Ward also presented a report to the first UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. Shortly afterwards the European Union decided to initiate the first environmental action programme. The Values Party, founded in New Zealand in 1972, was the first Green party in the world, and the forerunner of the British Green Party, established, as the People's Party, a year later. Environmental concern became as fashionable as kipper ties and platform boots. The politics of catalytic converters, power station scrubbers and bottle banks held sway. And a pattern was set for an ensuing decade in which the environment, described by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s as a "bum-rum issue", came to be regarded, even by her, as "one of the great challenges" of the 20th century.

The focus of 1970s environmentalism was resource depletion. More recently this has been replaced by the idea that it is not so much scarcity of resources that causes the problem but the impact man makes on the planet by his use of them. But still, that decade when Green politics first put down their roots established a precedent. The West took a serious look beyond the moment, beyond the next set of economic figures, to a more distant future. And in this it anticipated a millennial mood.



ROMAN TYPES

The number's not yet up for ancient numerals

For architects, film producers, kings, Popes, Olympic officials and families in which males pass their names to their sons the millennium bug has struck a year early. They awake today unsure of the date. For, unlike most of us, this eclectic group still counts in the system in use two millennia ago, dating its documents with an array of capital letters. And now (as we report on page 1 column ii) there is a dilemma unforeseen by Caesar or those recording his epics in wide screen celluloid: does today begin the year MIM? Or MCMXCIX? Or even, long-windedly, MDCCCCLXXXVIII?

Roman numerals are majestic, elegant and confusing. Some three centuries before the Year of Our Lord (impossible to represent in a system that has no zero), digital notation first took hold: holding apart his fingers and thumb a legionnaire chiselled a V on the milestone. And if Publius owed Claudius 10 sesterces, a double V or X could be gouged on a wax tablet. Larger numbers were difficult. IOU. Larger numbers were difficult. Borrowing the Greek phi to represent 1,000, the Ancients simply added brackets either side of the I, so that 100,000 was either side of the I, so that 100,000 was written as (IIII). The Columna Rostrata, erected to commemorate victory over the Carthaginians, repeated this symbol 23 times to give the figure of 2,300,000.

The rules are not cast in stone. Bored masons took short-cuts, and the subtractive principle caught hold. By the Middle Ages four strokes had been replaced by IV—for everyone except horologists. To this day, the clock stands still at X to IIII.

The system does not add up. Mathematics had to wait for the Arabs. How the Romans crossed hills and dale in such straight lines remains a mystery, as the finest surveyors in the land could not build Britain's first motorway (the I001) without curves. But complexity has its advantages. No one can complain that the BBC is repeating old material, for by the time you have begun to work out MCMCLXXXVIII the credits have rolled past. Linger in front of a handsome town hall, you have time to admire its lines while you decipher its cornerstone. And if you are called James Baker III, you can always insist that the tax demand should have been addressed to your father or even your grandfather, instead.

Writing a month in Roman numerals could resolve the transatlantic confusion between 6 September and June 9. It would add joyful tension to the lottery if all balls were Roman. And it connects us to our forebears: for though present confusion may last a year, we shall all know what we will celebrate in the year MM.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Wish the euro well but keep UK out

From Sir John Craven and others

Sir, The advent of the euro is a time to wish the new currency well. No British interest will be served if our European partners have an unstable currency. Nevertheless, it remains right for Britain to stand aside from this politically driven venture. Our business cycle is different from that of Germany and France. And our investment and trading patterns are different. British industry and commerce do more business in dollars than in all the European currencies combined.

Within the single market, but outside euroland, the prospects for Britain are bright. We have the fifth largest economy in the world and one of the most competitive; our political and trading interests reach around the globe, and our information-based industries are ideally suited to the 21st century. We will be able to set our monetary policy to suit our own conditions—an advantage which outweighs the modest gains to be derived from a regional currency zone.

After the euphoria of the euro's launch, grand vision will give way to practical realities. Upward harmonisation of tax is still urged on us as a logical consequence of EMU. The City, for example, faces the threat of a withholding tax on savings, which would be immensely damaging for London's vast international capital-market operations. An inward-looking Europe, with an overgrown public sector, has not yet recovered its ability to create jobs. The euro is no panacea for these problems. It could well exacerbate them.

Having restored sterling's reputation for financial discipline, let us have the confidence to keep it. What is right for Britain will be good for Europe too.

Yours etc,
JOHN CRAVEN,
Chairman, Lohr,
TIM CONGDON,
Managing Director,
Lombard Street Research,
WALTER ELTIS,
Emeritus Fellow, Exeter College, Oxford,
GERARD LYONS,
Chief Economist, Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank (DKB) International,
TIM MELVILLE-ROSS,
Director-General, Institute of Directors,
BRIAN PRIME,
Executive Director,
Federation of Small Businesses,
SAINSBURY OF PRESTON
CANDOVER,
WOLFSON OF SUNNINGDALE,
Chairman, Great Universal Stores,
Business for Sterling,
18 Buckingham Gate, SW1E 6PE,
December 31.

Desert Fox strategy

From Air Commodore Alastair Mackie

Sir, Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon (letter, December 23) interprets the Desert Fox strategy as engaging the enemy's war-fighting capabilities at long range instead of "fighting eyeball to eyeball when you don't need to".

Surely it wasn't that we didn't need to but rather that we couldn't. In the absence of the huge forces needed for a land war, wasn't our strategy simply to see what air power on its own could do? And given an enemy with some very nasty weapons indeed and a known propensity to use them, were we not, and are we not still, facing the grave risks consequent on air power not having achieved very much?

Yours faithfully,
ALASTAIR MACKIE,
4 Warwick Drive, SW15 6LB,
December 24.

From Mr Ian Mavor

Sir, Your columns have carried extensive comment on the problem of identifying the real objectives behind the Iraq airstrikes by the US and Britain.

A clue may be provided by Michael Theodorou's report of December 21, in which he quotes Said Aburish, the Palestinian who is writing a biography of Saddam Hussein, as saying: "Don't bomb them [Iraqis] on the ground. Pull back and say, 'If he [Hussein] goes, you can export all the oil you want to rebuild the country'."

Are the UK and US Governments afraid of the impact on the price of oil which could come about from such a policy statement?

Yours faithfully,
IAN MAJOR,
53 Bushwood Road,
Kew, Surrey TW9 3BG,
December 22.

Ramblers' wrongs

From Mr Mark Shore

Sir, I do not wish to take sides in the "right to roam" issue, but the photograph of ramblers on your back page today might in a small way throw light on some of the landowners' objections.

Three of the ramblers are shown standing on a farm gate; one rule of the countryside is, if you have to stand on or climb over a gate, always do so one at a time at the hinge end (basic physics, actually).

Yours faithfully,
MARK L. SHORE,
73 Woodburn Manor Park, Woodburn,
High Wycombe HP10 0ES,
December 28.

Multiple causes for decline in wild-bird numbers

From Mr Gavin Weightman

Sir, As an obituary of British wild birds Derwent May's article in today's Weekend section, "Where have all our birds gone?", is cautious and considered. However, in my view, it falls into the trap of overemphasising losses and underplaying gains.

For instance, there is ample shrub-habitat in Britain to support a much larger population of nightingales than arrives each summer and, since we are in the northern extremity of their range, their southward retreat may have nothing at all to do with the British environment. Our magpie population grew in the 1970s, spreading southwards from the Midlands. While the carrion crow is now very common in London, rooks disappeared from the capital in 1916 and the jackdaws left Hyde Park in the 1960s.

Sparrows, so rare now in many parts of the country, are abundant on the military firing ranges of Salisbury Plain and on the vast landfill rubbish dumps to the east of London. Song thrushes have been declining for a number of years, but mistle thrushes thrive. Great crested grebe, nearly extinct in Britain at the turn of the century, are now common, nesting on the lakes in London parks.

House martins, which returned to Central London after the Clean Air Act of 1956 had taken effect, have, inexplicably, recently disappeared from my area. In the countryside the planting of winter wheat seems to have favoured wood pigeons.

Perhaps such fluctuations are normal. It is certainly far too simple to blame them on the growth of industrialism. If the decline of sparrows in towns, for instance, is related to the disappearance of the once vast population of horses (as it may well be), is that an ecological disaster, or some-

thing we should calmly accept? Blackbirds were apparently much rarer in the 19th century than they are today: like robins and dunnocks (hedge sparrows), they are a woodland species that took to suburban gardens.

The natural world is wonderfully resilient and quick to exploit new opportunities. I wish the song thrushes would return to my back garden (they used to sing at night) but I really do not know what to blame for their disappearance. It is a sad and mysterious decline, but that is no reason to blame it on ourselves.

Yours faithfully,
GAVIN WEIGHTMAN,
15 Kelross Road, N5 2QS,
December 26.

From Mrs Elizabeth Sigmund

Sir, Congratulations on publishing Derwent May's article. I was amazed, however, to find in it no mention of the horrific effects of the use of pesticides and fungicides on wild birds.

Insecticides cause the death of thousands of our wild birds. Some of their effects are indirect: killing insects deprives birds of essential food. Others are direct: since the seeds of grain, vegetables, salad-crops and fruit are treated prior to planting, and then regularly sprayed with pesticides and fungicides, seed-eating birds are poisoned.

It is a terrible fact that our desire for "perfect" food can cause the destruction of these creatures, in the name of "scientific progress".

Yours sincerely,
ELIZABETH SIGMUND
(Co-ordinator, Organophosphate Information Network),
Heathfield Farmhouse,
Callington, Cornwall PL17 7HP,
December 28.

Penalties of an error of judgment

From Mr Alastair Albright

Sir, Since when was it a crime to aspire to better things or attempt to climb above one's station, or to lend money to a friend on preferential terms, or indeed without demanding interest at all?

Sadly, in today's Britain, no one can do such things honestly, decently and with genuine generosity without aspirations being cast, innuendos and slurs being made as to one's motives, and even accusations being levelled of corruption, critical misjudgment or dishonesty (letters, December 23, 24, 26, 29 and 30).

Tony Blair should stand by ministers who fall foul of an envious, mean-minded and uncharitable press. In the spirit of the society he wishes to foster and proclaim, namely a Christian and a classless one.

Yours sincerely,
ALASTAIR ALBRIGHT,
64 Paddenswick Road, W6 0UB,
December 28.

From Mr John D. Hart

Sir, I understand that prisoners serving a life sentence may not be eligible for parole unless they admit that they are guilty of the crime for which they have been imprisoned. Should not government ministers who resign or are sacked for having shown a lack of judgment, while protesting that they have "done nothing wrong", be banned from holding any public office until they accept they have done wrong?

Should not any MP who has been forced to return to the back benches in such circumstances be obliged to seek a vote of confidence from his or her constituents through a by-election?

Yours faithfully,
J. D. HART,
Hill House, Marlesford,
Wickham Market, Suffolk IP13 0AZ,
December 26.

From Mr Neil Workman

Sir, The loan of £373,000 from Geoffrey Robinson to Peter Mandelson is for some of us "pretty gut-wrenching stuff" (report, October 19, of Mr Mandelson's comments on General Pinochet's claiming diplomatic immunity).

Yours sincerely,
NEIL WORKMAN,
11 Park Crescent, Pontyclun,
Rhondda-Cynon-Taff CF72 9BR,
December 29.

The ultimate irony

From Professor Kenneth Minogue

Sir, The concept of irony in your columns is getting out of hand.

One correspondent on December 19 thinks it ironic that we are sending goodwill Christmas cards to friends and dropping bombs on Iraq at the same time: another on the same day derives irony from our entry into the European Convention on Human Rights coinciding with the Pinochet decision being set aside because one judge is a public supporter of human rights.

The first example is no more ironic

than the fact that we enjoy mushrooms and avoid toadstools; the second is simply untrue. The judgment of the law lord in question has been set aside for the quite different reason that he was judge in a case where he belonged to the same organisation as one of the plaintiffs—an evident issue of natural justice.

The concept of irony has already run amok in academia; is it now becoming the pomposity of choice in public discussion?

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH MINOGUE,
43 Perryman Street, SW6 3SN,
December 19.

Addressing postcodes

From Mr Roger Macdonald Smith

Sir, Mr Ray Perkins (letter, December 28) is not alone in wondering why we are still expected to use full postal addresses despite the existence of postcodes.

Some seven years ago, curious to test the system, I posted a letter to myself from Kenilworth bearing only my initial and surname, and my postcode. It reached me here in Cornwall after about ten days. Various frankings on the envelope testified to a tortuous journey; among them was one which read: "Please use the postcode."

Four years ago I tried again. Posted this time in Nathall, Northamptonshire, with a second-class stamp, my letter reached me within 24 hours. There's hope yet.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER MACDONALD SMITH,
Mill House, Treddale,
Cusburn, Truro TR4 8RN,
mcsu99@macsmith.freeserve.co.uk
December 29.

From Mr Keith Harrison

Sir, I endorse all that Ray Perkins says about postcodes. I have sent letters quoting only the postcode and on

all occasions the addressee has told me that the Post Office has written the street address on the envelope before delivering the letter.

Yours etc,
KEITH HARRISON,
16 Dovedale Close, Cardiff CF2 5LS,
keith@keithharrison.freeserve.co.uk
December 29.

From Mr Reg Gale

Sir, Many of us have the habit of putting our own addresses on the backs of letters we send to families and friends abroad.

I always put simply: "GALE FORCE TEN CV35 0AQ UK", which is sufficient worldwide. I am sure.

I have the honour to be,
Sir, your obedient servant,
REG GALE,
Force Ten, Spinney Close,
Redlands Farm, Lighthorne,
Warwickshire CV35 0AQ,
December 28.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number—0171-782 5046.

e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

From Mr Alasdair Laing

Sir, Derwent May makes a strong case for a reappraisal of agricultural practices to allow our bird populations to thrive in the wild. However, until the consumer is prepared to pay the real market price of food produced less intensively—either through shop prices or taxation to support environmental subsidy—farmers will have little choice but to operate as efficiently as they can if they are to survive.

Yours faithfully,
ALASDAIR LAING,
Logie House,
Forres, Morayshire IV36 2QN,
December 28.

From Mr Rod Attrill

Sir, Here in western Wales there is little arable farming. The "endangered" skylark (letter, December 26) is a daily delight above our fields, while swallows still nest in our barn and innets and meadow pipits abound. Red kites, ravens and peregrines are also common.

I do have one major concern, though. In the autumn, while the hedgerows are still laden with berries, they are drastically flailed—cut back so that all new growth, leaves and berries included, is removed. This both reduces cover for birds and deprives them of a valuable source of pre-winter feed.

I can understand the hedges being cut after the birds have finished breeding; but let's leave it until the new year, when they have also finished feeding.

Yours faithfully,
ROD ATTRILL,
Morygdo Farmhouse,
Llanarth, Ceredigion SA47 0NU,
rod@attrill.freeserve.co.uk
December 26.

Aonach Mor avalanche

From Mr Peter Wood

Sir, Your report today on the Aonach Mor tragedy (later editions) indicates that, according to unnamed experts, a category three avalanche warning on a scale of one to five put out by the Scottish Avalanche Information Service was unlikely to deter "well-equipped" climbers from going out.

Mr Wilde's party was apparently fully and properly equipped and that had no bearing whatever on the fact that the slope they were on avalanched. If a category three warning will not deter or cause modification of plans, what will? Perhaps the inquiry will determine the issue in a meaningful form. (I write as someone who has survived an avalanche.)

Yours faithfully,
PETER WOOD,
Newbold Farm,
Duntisbourne Abbots, Cirencester,
Gloucestershire GL7 7UN,
December 31.

Yachting pioneers

From Major M. C. Lewin-Harris

Sir, I really must applaud you and Sir Robin Knox-Johnston for his article on the Sydney-Hobart race, "Tested to the limits" (December 29). Having taken part in the 1979 Fastnet race (and come to grief, albeit not terminally) I can fully support the need for challenge, which was never more important than it is today.

Now, as a cruising yachtsman, I can not only enjoy my pastime, but do so in comparative comfort and safety. This is thanks to the many developments which only happened because people like Glyn Charles, or Pete Goss, who rescued a fellow competitor in the Vendée Globe race in similar conditions (reports, December 27 and 28, 1996), or indeed Sir Robin himself, are willing to accept such challenges and, in doing so, develop the necessary equipment to meet them head-on.

Long may this spirit continue.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL LEWIN-HARRIS
(Vice-Commodore,
The Royal Cruising Club),
Conquest Farm, Norton Fitzwarren,
Taunton TA2 6PN,
musketeer@btinternet.com
December 30.

Off target

From Mr Tony Collins

Sir, One of the items Santa left in my stocking this year is a book, *The Archers* (Virgin Publishing Ltd). I see from the back cover it is classified as "general non-fiction".

Is there something we should be told?

Yours sincerely,
TONY COLLINS,
37 Chaucer Road, Hillside,
Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 5RP,
tonycollins@dawdler.demon.co.uk
December 27.

Up to speed

From Dr Paula Moore

Sir, As a regular traveller by Eurostar, my husband received a Christmas card from them. It arrived on December 29. It seemed most appropriate.

Yours sincerely,
PAULA MOORE,
1 Northfield, Braughing,
Ware, Hertfordshire SG11 2QQ,
December 30.

Social news

The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, will be present at the Maundy Service in Bristol Cathedral at 11.00 am on Thursday April 1. Her Majesty will distribute the Royal Maundy during the service.

New Year's Day birthdays

Dr Jack Birks, company chairman, 78, Lord Colwyn, 57, Mr John Fuller, writer, 62, Lord Kingsland, QC, 57, Baroness Lloyd of Highbury, 71, Sir Albert McQuarrie, former MP, 81, Mr James Moorehouse, MEP, 75, Colonel P.A. Porteous, VC, 81, Mrs Patricia Purdy, former president, National Council of Women of Great Britain, 70, Mr J.D. Salinger, author, 80, Lord Swansea, 74.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Lorenzo de Medici (The Magnificent), Florence, 1449; Huldreich Zwingli, Swiss reformer, Wildhaus, 1484; Katherine Philips, poet, London, 1631; Paul Revere, American patriot, Boston, Massachusetts, 1735; Maria Edgeworth, novelist, Blackborough, Oxfordshire, 1767; Arthur Hugh Clough, poet, Liverpool, 1819; Sir James Frazer, anthropologist, Glasgow, 1854; Henry Handel Richardson (pen-name of Ethel Florence Lindesay), novelist, Melbourne, 1870; E.M. Forster, novelist, London, 1879; William Fox, film producer, Hungary, 1879; Martin Niemöller, anti-Nazi priest, Lipstadt, Germany, 1892; J. Edgar Hoover, founder of the FBI, Washington, 1895; H.A.R. (Kim) Philby, British double agent, Ambala, India, 1911; Jack de Manio, broadcaster, 1914.

DEATHS: William Wycherley, dramatist, London, 1776; James Francis Edward Stuart, the "Old Pretender", Rome, 1766; Johann Christian Bach, composer, London, 1782; Heinrich Hertz, physicist, Bonn, 1894; Sir Edwin Lutyens, architect, London, 1944; Maurice Chevalier, actor and singer, Paris, 1972; John Aloysius Costello, Prime Minister of Ireland 1948-51 and 1954-57, 1976.

The *Daily Universal Register* (renamed *The Times* on January 1, 1788), was founded, 1785. Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland came into force, 1801.

The Commonwealth of Australia was established with Edmund Barton as the first Prime Minister, 1901.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (formerly Company) broadcast its first programmes, 1927.

The farthing ceased to be legal tender, 1961.

Britain entered the Common Market, 1973.

Church news

Appointments

The Rev Michael Gudgeon, with permission to officiate (Chichester), to be Priest-in-Charge, Worthing St Andrew (same diocese).
The Rev Dr Michael Harrison, Priest-in-Charge, Egham Holy Trinity (Southwark), appointed Vicar, same benefice.
The Rev Nicholas Helm, Vicar, Sheffield St Bartholomew (Sheffield), to be Bishop's Chaplain, and Adviser in Spirituality (same diocese).
The Rev David Heslop, Chaplain, Course Leader and Tutor in Pastoral Studies, University of Derby, to be Vicar, Castle Donington, and Leighton cum Hemington (Leicester).
The Rev Richard Jackson, Curate, Lindfield (Chichester), to be Vicar, Rudgwick (same diocese).

University news

Ulster

The University of Ulster has announced more than £4.5 million in funding for research projects. They include:

Research Grants: Dr P.C. Eames, £150,456 from EPSRC (improved solar cell performance in building integration).
Charities: Professor J.A. Dunn, £125,000 from Positive Endos Trust (EMU promoting schools project).
Dr T. Rabasa, £20,251 from the Cancer Research Campaign (Manipulation of P450 gene expression in tumours).

Research Contracts: Professor F.C. Meads, £920,000 from CEC - Peace & Reconciliation (Technology and Software Incubation Centre).
Professor J.J. Strain, £328,408 from MAFF (Functional markers of optimal nutritional status for coped).

Dr A. Cooper, £300,731 from the DOE Environment Heritage Service (Northern Ireland Countryside Survey 2000).
Professor H.F. McMahon, £292,000 from HEC/EC/DENT (Infusing teacher education with the new technology).

Dr A. Cooper, £212,864 from CEC - LIFE (Biodiversity action on industrial sites).
Professor D. McKee, £200,904 from the Department of Health, (Life and Health Technologies (Northern Ireland)).

Professor M.E.C. Hall, £195,919 from CEC - ESPRIT (Successful user-centred systems engineering development and environment).
Professor B. Norton, £195,367 from CEC - ESPRIT (Successful user-centred systems engineering development and environment).

Dr J. Carmichael, £145,579 from the Department of Health, (Life and Health Technologies (Northern Ireland)).
Professor S.E. Cairns, £125,700 from the John Templeton Foundation, (Forgiveness and the reduction of crime project).

Dr E.T. McKenna, £128,678 from CEC - ESPRIT, (Micro-CARD: Silicon multifunctional microsystem for myocardial ischemia research).

Dr M.J. O'Neill, £128,678 from CEC - ESPRIT, (Micro-CARD: Silicon multifunctional microsystem for myocardial ischemia research).

Dr R.J. Miller, £76,900 from DTI and Pennick (Teaching Company programme).
Dr P. McKee, £76,900 from DTI and Pennick (Teaching Company programme).

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The night sky in January

By MICHAEL J. HENDRIE
ASTRONOMY
CORRESPONDENT

MERCURY is in the morning sky but too near the Sun for observation this month.

Venus is a brilliant evening object of -3.9 magnitude, setting in the southwest 2 hours after the Sun by the 31st. The waxing crescent Moon will be near by on the 18th and 19th.

Mars is in Virgo rising about midnight by the 31st. During the month it brightens from 1.0 to 0.6 magnitude as it approaches opposition in April, when it will be at its brightest and closest to the Earth. Mars will be 4 degrees north of the bright star Spica about the 8th and the Moon will be close by on the 9th.

Jupiter passes from Aquarius into Pisces during January, still a very bright -2.2 magnitude. It sets in the west about 21h by the 31st. Moon just to the south on the 21st.

Saturn is 0.6 magnitude and in Pisces. By the end of the month it will be setting about midnight. Moon near by on the 23rd-24th.

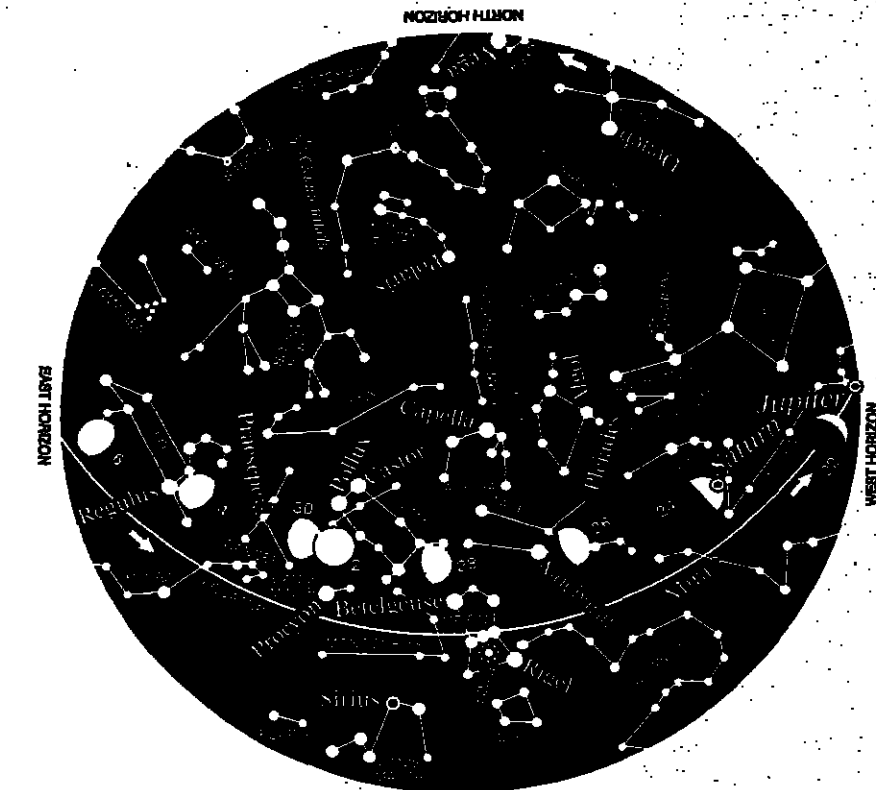
Uranus and Neptune are in Capricorn throughout 1999. Both are too close to the Sun for observation this month. Neptune being in conjunction with the Sun on the 22nd and Uranus on the 2nd February.

The Moon: full Moon 2d 03h, last quarter 9d 14h, new Moon 17d 16h, first quarter 24d 19h and full Moon 31d 16h. There will be two full moons in January and two in March but none in February this year. There will be a penumbral eclipse of the Moon on the 31st but the Moon will be only slightly darkened and will not rise in the British Isles until after mid-eclipse, so the event is likely to pass unnoticed. The Moon will be near the bright star Regulus in Leo on the 4th-5th and near Aldebaran in Taurus on the 26th-27th.

The Earth will be at perihelion, its closest to the Sun, on 3d 13h (147 million km).
A total eclipse of the Moon in Perseus, begins from 21 to 3.4 magnitude every 69 hours. It can be seen when faint this month about 14d 03h, 17d 01h and 19d 21h.

Sunset on the 1st is at 16h 00m and on the 31st at 16h 45m while sunrise is at 08h 08m and 07h 40m on the same dates. Astronomical twilight ends at 18h 05m and 18h 45m early and late in the month and begins again at 06h 05m and 05h 45m.

January is often the best



The diagram shows the brighter stars that will be above the horizon in the latitude of London at 23h (11 pm) at the beginning, 22h (10 pm) in the middle, and 21h (9 pm) at the end of the month, local mean time. At places away from the Greenwich meridian the Greenwich times at which the diagram applies are later than the above by one hour for each 15 deg west of Greenwich and earlier by a like amount if the place be east. The map should be turned so that the horizon the observer is facing (shown by the words around the circle) is at the bottom, the north being at the top. Greenwich Mean Time, known to astronomers as Universal Time, and expressed in 24-hour notation, is used in the accompanying notes unless otherwise stated.

month to see the winter constellations. At the time of the chart the most easily recognised of all the constellation figures stands astride the meridian. Orion the hunter is due south, the right way up and at his highest in the sky. Betelgeuse at his left shoulder is a giant red star, slightly variable in brightness, but unlike Algor, in an irregular and unpredictable way. The brightness is 0.5 magnitude. Rigel by Orion's right foot is bluer, is 0.1 magnitude and of higher surface temperature. It is further away from us, 910 light years compared with 310 light years for Betelgeuse.

Below Orion's belt of three bright stars lies M42, the Great Nebula in Orion. This is visible to the naked eye but even low powered binoculars show a splendid glowing cloud of gas and dust with several stars imbedded within it. In even a small telescope the Orion nebula is a beautiful sight, greenish in colour and showing much wispy structure. It is part of a large area of dust and gas that spreads over most of the constellation of Orion, M42

being just the brightest part. A line sloping down from Orion's belt towards the left (east) leads the eye to the blue star Sirius the brightest star in the sky in Canis Major (Greater Dog). As it is never very high in our sky it often scintillates wildly, flashing red, blue and apple green. Sirius, also known as the dog star is -1.5 magnitude and is only 9 light years away. About half way between Betelgeuse and the Pleiades lies another red star, Aldebaran, in Taurus. This 0.9 magnitude star is 68 light years distant.

About an equal distance to the east of Betelgeuse is 0.4 magnitude Procyon, principal star of Canis Minor (Lesser Dog) in this inconspicuous constellation. Further still to the east is the bright star Regulus (1.3 mag), brightest star of Leo Major (Greater Lion). Above Procyon lies Gemini (Heavenly Twins) Castor (1.6 mag) and Pollux (1.1 mag) forming the twins. The figure of Gemini, tilted to the equator. The Twins rise in the northeast lying parallel

with the horizon, but set in the northwest almost upright, feet first with Castor and Pollux disappearing last.

This change in orientation of the constellations as they cross the night sky is one of the factors making identification difficult. Another is the apparent change in size: the figures look larger near the horizon than when higher in the sky. This also applies to the Sun and Moon.

Much has been written about the Moon illusion and many causes proposed, most of us perceive objects to be larger when near the horizon though they are no larger: if anything, distance and refraction combine to make them slightly smaller than when they are at their highest point.

The *Times Night Sky 1999* contains monthly star charts and notes. The total eclipse of the Sun in August and major meteor showers are covered. Published by Times Books (price £4.99) it is available in good bookshops or by ringing the HarperCollins Credit Card Hotline on 0870 900 2050 (p&p free within UK).

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Greek bronzes cast in a new light

Norman Hammond reports on a mystery surrounding the origins of two nude Classical statues

TWO Ancient Greek bronze statues found off the coast of Italy were probably made in the southern Peloponnese, analysis of their clay has shown. Specific details of the cores' composition also suggests that one statue was remodelled centuries after its original casting.

The discovery of the two life-sized nude statues, probably of warriors or athletes, in 1972 caused a sensation: Classical bronzes of such a scale rarely survive. They were found by fishermen near the hamlet of Riace, in Calabria, and a tug-of-war immediately began between regional and national authorities over where they should be displayed: the Italian Government wanted them in Rome, the Calabrians in their capital of Reggio, near the toe of Italy, where they would be a source of local pride and tourist income.

The Calabrians won, but the figures were sent to Florence for conservation and study. It was determined that both dated to the 5th century BC, but, as Gianni Lombardi and Massimo Vidale report in the *Journal of Archaeological Science*, it was difficult to determine the circumstances or the date of their loss.

It was generally assumed that they had been lost during a shipwreck, but since no remains were found, no date could be

assigned. The Florentine restorers discovered that much of the original casting cores remained inside the statues, however, and recently new techniques of micro-excavation using remotely controlled cameras and digital imaging were applied to remove samples safely over a two-year period.

The cores of the legs and torso were found to have been made of separate slabs of clay mixed with animal hair and formed around iron bars, one of the standard techniques for large Classical bronzes. Complex joins between the legs and torso also suggested that the cores were assembled and disassembled more than once before the wax coating used in lost-wax casting was applied.

Almost 300 core samples were taken from the older statue, dating to

470-460BC, and almost 700 from the younger, of 440-430BC. A battery of techniques, including neutron-activation, plasma emission spectrometry, and palaeontological analyses were used to determine the chemical composition and mineral and fossil content of the clays. The clay cores themselves were most closely matched in Euboea, Attica and the northeastern Peloponnese, all in southern Greece: of these, the plain of Argos near modern Nauplion is the best candidate. Dr Lombardi and Dr Vidale say.

While most of each core was homogeneous, anomalies were found around the armpits. In the younger statue, the anomaly embraced the use of gypsum, a novel material, which, combined with a high lead content in the arms, suggested their replacement in the later Hellenistic Roman period: the whole right arm and the left forearm were renewed, in a slightly different pose from the originals.

This in turn showed that the loss of the statues could not have occurred until several centuries after they were cast, perhaps during the Roman sack of conquered Greece, when many works of art were taken to adorn Rome and glorify its Emperors. Source: *Journal of Archaeological Science* 25: 1055-1066.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr D.S. Bailey and Miss A.E. Mitchell. The engagement is announced between David Anthony, son of Mr and Mrs Harry Bailey, of Chesham, Surrey, and Alison Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Norman Mitchell, of Westwicks, Kent.

Mr L.R. Christopher and Miss T. Goreham. The engagement is announced between Lance, son of Mr and Mrs A.K. Christopher, of Poole, Dorset, and Tina, daughter of Mr and Mrs A.C. Goreham, of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Mr E.T. Collier and Dr L.S.M. Stoeck. The engagement is announced between Eddie, younger son of Mr John and Lady Collier, of Dorset, and Lucy, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Stoeck, of Southover House, Tunbridge Wells, Dorset.

Mr R.A. Dickson and Miss L.L. Holmes. The engagement is announced between Robert Alexander, son of Mr and Mrs Ian Dickson, of Mussenden, France, and Louise Ingrid, daughter of Mr and Mrs Norman Holmes, of Chichester, Surrey.

Dr P.J. French and Miss V.J. Draper. The engagement is announced between Philip, only son of Mr and Mrs Terence French, of St Albans, Hertfordshire, and Vanessa, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Edward Draper, of Old Skelmersdale, Lancashire.

Mr V. Golding and Miss V. Heller. The engagement is announced between Vincent, elder son of Mr and Mrs V. Golding, of Canterbury, and Victoria, elder daughter of Mr G. Heller, of Winchester, and Mrs S. Heller, of Southampton.

Mr N.E.L. Graves and Miss N.L. Gordon-Duff. The engagement is announced between Nicholas, only son of Mr and Mrs Brian Graves, of Tilling, West Sussex, and Nicola, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Gordon-Duff, of Restall, Lancashire.

Mr P.N. Jarvis and Miss T.E. Mothman. The engagement is announced between Philip, younger son of Mr and Mrs John Jarvis, of Winchester, Dorset, and Elizabeth, elder daughter of Captain and Mrs Paul Mothman, of Arundale, New South Wales.

Mr R.E. Lane and Miss S. Bird. The engagement is announced between Ben, younger son of Mr and Mrs T.E. Lane, of Aston Clinton, Buckinghamshire, and Samantha, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs T.C. Bird, of Albion Street, London W2.

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Dr P.A. Miller and Dr C.C.M. Hughes. The engagement is announced between Paul Anthony, son of Mr V. Miller, of Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, and Mrs A. Miller, of Eton Wick, Windsor, and other the Collyer, daughter of Mr and Mrs W.H. Hughes, of Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire.

Mr R.G. Morris and Miss J.J. Hunting. The engagement is announced between Gavin, elder son of Mr and Mrs R.G. Morris, of Canterbury, and Helen, youngest daughter of Mrs Isabel Hunting and the late Mr Richard Haigh Hunting, of West Byfleet, Surrey.

Mr R.J. Sefton and Miss S.A. Simpson. The engagement is announced between Ian, son of Mr and Mrs Robin Sefton, of Wotton Bassett, Wiltshire, and Sophie, daughter of Mr David A.G. Simpson, and Mrs Janet Simpson, of Hastings, Sussex.

Mr D.M. Swinerton and Miss M.C. Nicholas. The engagement is announced between David, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Swinerton, of Aldridge, Staffordshire, and Melissa, daughter of Mr Jonathan Grant-Nicholas, of Bressingham, Dorsetshire, and Mrs Justine Nicholas, of Lifford.

Mr P.D. Thomson and Miss R.E. Baxter. The engagement is announced between Peter, son of Mr and Mrs Ian Thomson, of Chelsea, and Rachel, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Ian Baxter, of Windesham, Surrey.

Dr R.S. Thomson and Dr A.J. Marriot. The engagement is announced between Richard, younger son of Mr and Mrs Stuart Thomson, of East Horsley, Surrey, and Alison, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Marriot, of Lashborough, Gloucestershire.

Mr M.J. Tomlinson and Miss E.V. Mynors. The engagement is announced between Michael, elder son of Dr Howard and Dr Heather Tomlinson, of Harley Court, Hereford, and Frances, second daughter of Dr Howard and Lady Mynors, of Treago, St. Weonards, Herefordshire.

Mr S.J. Ward and Miss J.M. Perry. The engagement is announced between Stuart, younger son of Mr and Mrs R.J. Ward, of Kingwood, Monmouthshire, and Jill, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs W.A. Perry, of Tilshead, Wiltshire.

Mr I. Weir and Miss S. Varley. The engagement is announced between Ian, son of Mr and Mrs Ian Weir, of London, and Sarah, elder daughter of Mr Christopher Varley and Ms Anne Biddell.

Latest wills

Sir Horace Heyman, Chairman English Industrial Estates Corporation 1970-77, member, Supervisory Board Zurich 1955-86, Director UK Group 1955-86, of Whitburn, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, left estate valued at £215,541 net.

He left £6,000 to the Tyne and Wear Foundation, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne. To set up two scholarships in the name of his wife Lady Dorothy Heyman and The Historic House, 134 to 136, Broomfield North, London, to fund the British Lung Foundation, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Viscountess Greenwood, of Brightwell cum Sotwell, Wiltshire, left estate valued at £29,229 net.

He left £5,000 to Gray's Inn to fund a scholarship in memory of his late father.

Lady Beryl Caroline Rees Mayhew, of Colney, Norwich, left estate valued at £1,064,959 net.

She left £2,000 to Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club; £1,000 each to Royal Yachting Association, Beccles Sailing Club, Weymouth and Oulton Broad Yacht Club and Norfolk Broads Yacht Club; plus shares in her estate to 24 charitable organisations.

Lady Amy Mary Brablin, of Hampstead, London NW3, left estate valued at £91,389 net.

Lady Jean Elizabeth Lockhart-Munro, of Winchester, Hampshire, left estate valued at £428,159 net.

George Albert Grange, of Baildon, West Yorkshire, left estate valued at £261,345 net.

Perregine Philip Dorney Palmer, of Dorney, Windsor, Berkshire, left estate valued at £7,373,065 net.

Margaret Elizabeth Crook of Thatcham, Berkshire, left estate valued at £6,360,395 net.

Kenneth Maurice Williams, of Clarendon, Salisbury, Wiltshire, left estate valued at £6,743,102 net.

He left £1,000 to both Salisbury Cathedral, and St Martin's Church, Salisbury, plus the remainder of his estate between Royal Masonic Hospital, Princess Louise Scottish Hospital, St John's Ambulance Brigade, Salisbury, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Battersea Dogs' Home, FDSA, and the RNLI.

Ernest William Lancaster-Platt, of Streety, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, left estate valued at £2,296,288 net.

He left £1,000 each to RAF Benevolent Fund, Royal British Legion, Poppo Appeal, Salvation Army, Blesma, Midland Society for the Blind, Terrace Higgins Trust, MS Society, and Parkinson's Disease Society; and £500 to Ambassador College, Boreham Wood.

Eva Renée Cathcart, of Aiskew, Bedale, North Yorkshire, left estate valued at £1,033

OBITUARIES

MICHAEL SHERARD

Michael Sherard, couturier, died on December 26 aged 88. He was born on July 17, 1910.

Michael Sherard was one of London's leading lights in the immediate postwar period, when it seemed possible that Britain's couturiers might wrest the lead from Paris. That dream was dashed by the wave of enthusiasm for Dior's New Look, but Michael Sherard held the creative ground more convincingly than any other London couturier during the 1950s, until he was swept aside by Mary Quant and the new, home-grown young designers of the next decade.

Michael Sherard was born in Kingston upon Thames into a family which had produced many prominent figures in the town's public life, his grandfather was a former Mayor and his father a leading local lawyer. The second of six boys, Sherard was christened Malcolm, but at the outset of his career, in the late 1940s, he decided that Michael would roll more smoothly off the tongues of Mayfair's fashionable set.

Educated at Berkhamsted and the Westminster School of Art, Sherard gained his early fashion experience as an apprentice with Peter Russell, who was a rarity even in 1930s London, a huntin', shootin', and fishin' dress designer. Sherard always recalled him as a tough businessman as well as a shrewd operator with customers. Sherard was his personal assistant from 1931 to 1940, when he went to work in the censorship department of the Admiralty.

In 1945, with financial assistance from his family, he opened his couture establishment in Connaught Street, later moving to Curzon Street, the epicentre of London's fashionable life in the 1950s.

Though he started on a shoestring, Sherard became fashionable very quickly with an upper-class clientele which in those days went to a couturier for good coats, well-cut suits and fabulous ballgowns. He provided all three, though his heart was in ballgowns most of all. During the life of his fashion house, he produced 35 couture collections, one of which he sold in its entirety to the American fashion store Marshall Field, which remained a loyal customer for many years.

Although he designed wholesale collections, to be produced anonymously and without his



In the 1950s Sherard was one of London's best hopes of displacing Paris for fashion

label, he was never happy working this way, because as a romantic and a perfectionist, he found it too impersonal, and he preferred to have hands-on control over the final product.

He loved designing for film and the theatre, and many of the stars he dressed for public and private occasions, such as Phyllis Calvert, were to remain friends for the rest of his life. He was involved in more than thirty West End productions, and created the wardrobe for the leading lady in *The Mousetrap* twice in its

long run. As a ballet lover, he was thrilled to be chosen to provide the personal wardrobe for Margot Fonteyn shortly after the war when the Royal Ballet went on a promotional tour of North America. Several couturiers had been asked by the Government to design wardrobes for the ballerinas as a boost to the British fashion industry, but it was a feather in Sherard's cap to dress Fonteyn herself.

In 1948 Sherard became a member of the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers, signalling official

acceptance of his stature in London fashion. Encouraged by the Government and chaired by Lady Pamela Berry, the society included the top designers of the time and did much to reassert London's position as a fashion centre after the war, especially with American buyers.

Sherard's working methods were traditional. Murray Arbell, the dressmaker to Diana Princess of Wales, who trained with him (as did Caroline Charles), recalls that Sherard's drawings were almost like stick figures. They were

essentially practical working tools, which showed precisely how a dress was to be made, though Sherard was always happiest when draping directly on the model.

He was at his best in the traditional couture crisis when, in the last 24 hours before a presentation, a couple of extra dresses have to be designed and made, with nobody sleeping the night before and an exhausted workroom getting them out on time for the show.

Sherard's largely socialite clientele loved his puckish wit, but they frequently burdened him with requests for daughters and nieces to become fashion models. His way of putting them off without offending them was worthy of Noel Coward. His house model, Patricia, was exceedingly tall. He made her a magnificent deep red velvet coat trimmed with Persian lamb and almost sweeping the floor. It was an important piece of clothing, and great skill was needed to carry it off. When "debut" girls were brought in, he used to ask them to try on this coat. The resulting picture of the girl entirely swamped and looking ridiculous was enough to put off the most persistent mother without offending her *amour propre*.

Overwhelmed by financial problems, Sherard closed his establishment in 1965, but continued his involvement with fashion as a lecturer and consultant. He advised fashion students in Miami and was principal lecturer at the London College of Fashion from 1966 to 1975. In his retirement his great interest was his involvement with the Girdlers' Livery Company in the City, which he had joined when he was 18, becoming Master for 1959-60. In 1961 he masterminded the decoration of the company's new headquarters, which was described at the time as "little Versailles in the City".

Michael Sherard was never really given the recognition that his ability deserved. With his talent, he should have been a major and continuing figure in London fashion, but his gifts were overshadowed by the more strident self-publicity of other members of the Incorporated Society. He was forced out of business by rising costs, not lack of skill, as the examples of his clothes in various costume collections amply testify. If some of his grander colleagues were rather snuffy about him at times, they certainly could never fault his talent.

He never married.

SIR HAROLD KENT

Sir Harold Kent, GCB, QC, former Procurator-General and Treasury Solicitor, died on December 4 aged 95. He was born on November 11, 1903.



Kent in the 1930s: in his early years he wrote whodunnits

HAROLD KENT'S last big assignment as Procurator-General and Treasury Solicitor, was to instruct the Attorney General and prepare the papers for the 1963 Vassall Tribunal. Chaired by Lord Radcliffe, the tribunal followed the jailing for 18 years of the Admiralty clerk John Vassall, a homosexual who had been blackmailed into spying for the KGB.

Kent himself interviewed Vassall at some length and stayed with the inquiry until the bitter end, which included the imprisonment of two journalists who had refused to disclose their sources. Having been appointed GCB in 1954, he was advanced to GCB in 1963 in recognition of the enormous workload the Vassall case had imposed on him.

He later retained some links with security issues, serving on the Security Commission between 1965 and 1971 and on the 1971-72 committee set up to re-examine Section Two of the Official Secrets Act. Before starting his ten years as Treasury Solicitor in 1953, Kent had established his reputation as a parliamentary counsel.

As such, he was involved not only in framing much of the emergency legislation during the war, but in the heady sequence of nationalisation measures introduced by the Attlee Government after 1945, including the Act which established the National Health Service. Yet at one time it looked as if he might make his name not so much as a lawyer but as a thriller writer.

Harold Simcox Kent had been born at Tientsin, China, where his father was working as a barrister, specialising in Anglo-Chinese commerce. At the age of eight Harold was sent home to prep school in Malvern, travelling on the Trans-Siberian Railway with his brother, who was only a year older.

He won a scholarship to Rugby, and another to Merton College, Oxford, where he took a disappointing second in Greats. He was then called to the Bar in 1928.

Kent started writing whodunnits to supplement his meagre earnings as a young barrister with a new wife to support. He finished his first, *The Black Castle*, while on honeymoon on the Norfolk

Broads. A national newspaper celebrated the first publication of two "interesting new writers" in one week, one being Kent and the other Leslie Charteris, creator of *The Saint*. But the paths of the two newcomers soon diverged. Although Kent followed up his early success with *The Tenant of Snuggler's Rock*, the costs of fatherhood and house purchase prompted him to seek refuge in more regular employment as a junior parliamentary counsel.

From Whitehall he joined the Royal Artillery at the start of the Second World War but a duodenal ulcer, from which he had suffered for some years, took a strong dislike to army food. He was invalided out within weeks.

After the Vassall Tribunal, he took the option of retiring at 60 to become the Church of England's first Standing Counsel, first to the Church Assembly and then to the General Synod. This involved him in drafting church legislation, so returning to the kind of work he loved best. The so-called "Pastoral Measures", enabling the grouping of parishes and ministries, were among the matters with which he had to deal.

He held the post for eight years, also serving on the Church and State Commis-

sion, and as a creative lawyer he did much to free the Church from state interference in issues of "worship and doctrine". He went on to occupy a succession of largely voluntary church appointments. He became Vicar-General of the Province of Canterbury, Dean of the Archdeaconry (in effect the Church's most senior judge) and Commissary to the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's.

He took silk in 1973 at the age of 70, and was awarded a doctorate of civil law four years later. In 1979 he gave further evidence of his literary gifts by writing an amusing autobiography, *In on the Act*.

In parallel with his work for the Church of England, he became an active churchgoer in his retirement, serving as churchwarden at Chipping Campden. A tall, quietly spoken and scholarly man, he kept up his knowledge of the Classics and enjoyed studying the New Testament in its Greek texts together with a local group of similarly interested friends.

He married his wife, Zillah, a state-registered nurse, in 1930, after meeting her in the hospital where his mother was recovering from an operation. She died in 1987 but Kent, who lost his only daughter more than 30 years ago, is survived by a son.

WILLIAM ALLEN

William Allen, CBE, architect and architectural theorist, died on December 14 aged 84. He was born on June 29, 1914.

ALTHOUGH of Canadian origin, William Allen spent his professional life in Britain and earned a high reputation in two specialist fields: as an architectural scientist and as a teacher and lecturer. He had a long connection with the Building Research Station at Watford, which he joined in 1937, immediately after arriving in England, and where he was chief architect, 1953-61. He then became Principal of the Architectural Association School of Architecture, 1961-66.

In 1939 he published *Sound Transmission in Buildings* (written with R. Fitzmaurice), and he was to remain a leading expert on all aspects of architectural technology, especially acoustics and lighting. He and his partner, John Bickerdike, were frequently called on to advise on technical problems that had arisen in old and new buildings, and as acoustic and lighting consultants. They were the architects for the concert hall in Manchester for the Northern College of Music, notable for its acoustics, and were acoustic consultants for the Festival



Hall in London and for the Gulbenkian Foundation concert hall and museum in Lisbon.

They continued their work as consultants long after Allen had retired from teaching and from full-time practice. For example, in 1988 Allen and his partners were asked to devise a comprehensive new lighting scheme for the Chapel Royal at Hampton Court Palace, built in the 16th century and later refurbished by Sir Christopher Wren and Sir John Gibbons. Although the chapel had not been touched by the fire of 1986, the lighting installed and altered over the years had made Gibbons's elaborate wood carving almost invisible, and the chancel and choir were un-

able to read in comfort. There was also a glare that made the wall decorations difficult to see. Bickerdike and Allen, working for the Property Services Agency, devised a lighting scheme that discreetly dealt with all these problems.

William Alexander Allen was born in Canada, the son of a surgeon. He was educated at schools in Winnipeg and at the University of Manitoba, where he won the gold medal for architecture in 1936. The previous year he had been awarded the silver medal of the Royal Institute of Architects of Canada. In 1938, the year after he came to England, he was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects, of which he was to become a Fellow in 1965. He served on the council of the institute from 1953 until 1972 and again from 1982 until 1985.

He was also chairman of the Fire Research Advisory Committee, 1973-83, and president of the Institute of Acoustics, 1975-76. For this work and for his many papers on aspects of architectural science, he also won awards in Canada, America, and Portugal. He was appointed CBE in 1980.

In 1938 he married Beatrice Mary Teresa Pearson, who survives him, along with their daughter and two sons.

Bryan MacLean, singer and guitarist, died on Christmas Day after a heart attack, aged 52. He was born in Los Angeles on September 25, 1946.

BRYAN MACLEAN was a member of the 1960s group Love, for whom he wrote *Alone Again Or*, one of the most enduring and evocative songs of the era. The band's truly creative period, under the leadership of the unpredictable Arthur Lee, was brief, curtailed by an unhealthy appetite for hard drugs. Yet by the time Love disintegrated they had recorded some unforgettable music and one classic, *Forever Changes* (1967), a record which continues to appear prominently in polls of the best albums of all time.

Within a year of producing their masterpiece, the original band had fallen apart, and by 1970 MacLean had left the music business and found religion. He later re-emerged as a writer of Christian music, but he will always be remembered for his part in the soundtrack of that distant "summer of love" which his group shared a name.

MacLean came from a wealthy home in the Hollywood Hills, where the composer Frederick Loewe, the writer

of *My Fair Lady*, was a neighbour. He declared the boy a prodigy at the age of three, and MacLean grew up steeped in musicals rather than rock'n'roll. Liza Minnelli was an early girlfriend, and the two would sit at the piano together playing show tunes.

Yet by the early 1960s the Beatles had made the guitar irresistible and MacLean left high school to become a roadie for the Byrds. In 1965 he failed an audition to join the Monkees, when he was one of 457 hopefuls who replied to an advert in the *Hollywood Reporter*, but he soon joined forces with the maverick Lee in a band called the Grass Roots.

Most American groups of the time gravitated to San Francisco, but after changing their name to Love, the LA-based band built a reputation playing the clubs on Sunset Strip. A residency at Bido Lites brought them to the attention of Jac Holzman, head of the Elektra label, home already to such folk artists as Judy Collins and Tom Paxton. Holzman was looking to break into the rock market, and Love became the first band he signed. The Doors were the second.

In 1966 and 1967, Love made three impressive albums, clearly influenced by the Byrds and the Beatles but with an interesting psychedelic strangeness all their own. Although Arthur Lee was the main writer, MacLean contributed some fine songs, including *Orange Skies*, *Old Man* and the haunting *Alone Again Or*, with its flamenco-style guitar and dramatic trumpet flourishes.

Unfortunately a combination of the drugs and Lee's unstable personality was rendering the band increasingly dysfunctional. There were lurid tales of group members robbing doughnut stands to support their drug addiction. "Their name should be Hate rather than Love," remarked Peter Albin, of the San Francisco band Big Brother and the Holding Company.

By 1968 Love had splintered, leaving Lee the sole original member. "At least two of them were irrepressibly hooked on heroin. I felt I needed to get out while the going was good,"



Bryan MacLean (far right) with the other members of Love in their late 1960s heyday

MacLean later said. Two of the group's members - Ken Forssi and John Echols - were soon serving prison sentences, but MacLean was also addicted. He secured a solo deal with Elektra, but abandoned music and became a born-again Christian. The turning point, he explained, was sitting in a New York bar and feeling his drink "turn to sand" in his mouth.

He returned to live with his parents in Los Angeles, did various manual jobs and obtained a real estate licence. But a Christian fellowship called the Vineyard was taking up increasing amounts of his time. He started singing at Friday night Bible classes, opened a Christian nightclub

on Rodeo Drive called the Daisy, and served ten years in the ministry. He also began writing songs again, including several hits for country-tinged performers such as Debby Boone and Patty Loveless.

There were various attempts to re-form Love, which were hampered by arguments over past royalties and soured relations between MacLean and Lee, who is currently serving a 12-year sentence for firearms offences.

MacLean briefly led a band bearing his own name in the early 1980s which included his half-sister Maria McKee, but when she formed the critically acclaimed Lone Justice he was invited to contribute only as a writer.

In recent years there has been more interest than ever in the work of Love and its former members. *If You Believe in*, released in 1997, was a collection of original MacLean demos and home recordings from the 1960s. *Alone Again Or* has recently been used in an American beer commercial, and at least two books about Love are in the pipeline. At the time of his death MacLean was working on what he called an album of "worship music".

MacLean is the second original member of Love to die within a year, after Forssi's death from cancer last January. He never married and is survived by his mother and a half-sister.

MR. E. H. HILLMAN: AIRWAY PIONEER

Mr. Edward Henry Hillman, managing director of Hillman Airways, Limited, and the former motor-coach proprietor, died suddenly at his home at Gidea Park, Essex, yesterday, aged about 45. He had been suffering from high blood pressure.

At one time in humble circumstances, Mr. Hillman rose to become one of the most important transport operators in Great Britain. He was the pioneer in this country of inland airways, and he later extended his services to Le Touquet and Paris. It was his boast that he never had a day's schooling. His first job was when he was only two years old, and he had to make his own way in life. When he was nine he obtained employment binding brushes. Two years later he joined the 2nd Battalion, The Essex Regiment, and was sent to Malta as a bandboy. He afterwards transferred to the cavalry and fought through the war, at the end of which he was a sergeant-major money to buy a car. Hillman used his Army bounty to buy a motorcar, which he let out on hire. With the proceeds he opened a cycle repair shop in Romford.

It was as a motor-coach-proprietor that Mr.

ON THIS DAY

January 1, 1935

Edward Hillman was a true transport pioneer. After he had built up a fleet of motor coaches starting with one car, he ran a cross-Channel air service one of his first pilots was the famous woman flyer Amy Johnson.

Hillman built up the substantial foundations of the large business he controlled at the time of his death. They grew from very small beginnings. Mr. Hillman bought his first coach in 1923, and with himself as driver and his son as conductor ran a service between Romford and Chelmsford. It was at first far from successful, and on occasions "it was necessary to borrow money to buy petrol. But as last success came to him, to time he was able to acquire more and more coaches until, by the beginning of 1930, he owned a fleet of over 200 and operated extensive services

between London, Romford, and Chelmsford and along the East Coast.

His enterprise and initiative were unbounded. He was said to be the first motor-coach proprietor to offer penny fare stages and to issue motor-coach season tickets between the City and the suburbs. He was quick to see the possibilities of civil aviation and turned his attention to that mode of transport in the early part of 1932.

His initiative and organizing power again produced rapid development. He started with a small fleet of aeroplanes running between Romford, Ramsgate, Margate, Broadstairs, and Clacton. He extended his services to other parts of the country. He believed that aviation could be run on strictly business lines, and he started civil air circles by offering air transport at 3d a mile a passenger - half the fare then usually charged. Early in 1933 he started an aeroplane service to Le Touquet, and in April of the same year inaugurated two services daily both ways between London and Paris. For a time he employed Amy Johnson as one of his cross-Channel pilots. She was the first woman to be so engaged.

The formation of Hillman's Airways, Limited, was announced on December 18, with an authorized capital of £150,000. Hillman's Airways, Limited, stated yesterday: "The business is being carried on as usual."

NEWS

Euro dream becomes reality

European dreamers finally saw their cherished hope become reality at midnight when 11 countries signed away their sovereignty over monetary policy and the single currency was born.

The birth of the euro was marked in Brussels with a mass balloon launch and toast poured from methuselahs of champagne as ministers spoke of a great moment in history and set their sights on deeper political and economic union. But there were still sour notes amid the rhetoric. Pages 1, 11, 12

Jenkins admits wine ban plan

Lord Jenkins of Hillhead admitted that in 1968 he was the architect of a secret Labour plan, codenamed Brutus, to ban foreign holidays and stop luxury imports. French wine, Swiss watches, avocados and out-of-season strawberries were on the list to save the economy. Pages 1, 4, 5

Refugee appeal

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, will today appeal for greater public understanding of the 50 million refugees throughout the world, who have been uprooted from their homes by persecution, war or natural disaster. Page 2

Prescott 'on board'

John Prescott insisted he was "fully on board" Tony Blair's modernising crusade as he tried to repair the impression of a Cabinet riven by power struggles. Page 2

Father's fight

A father told how he fought for three and a half hours to keep his nine-year-old son alive in icy waters after their fishing boat sank. As Lewis Vowles kept slipping into unconsciousness his father and two friends sang and cuddled the boy. Page 3

Avalanche ordeal

The young couple buried beneath an avalanche told how they lay unable to move for 16 hours, not knowing if the other was alive or dead. Sarah Finch, 25, and Steven Newton, 24, were recovering from mild hypothermia. Page 3

On the run

Charlie Whelan, The spin-doctor who prides himself on being just a mobile phone call away from journalists, was successfully evading a press manhunt. Page 6

Happy new mm ... or something

Welcome to the year MIM, as the Emperor Flavius might have said. Then again, he might have preferred to wish his subjects a happy new MCMXCIX. Or should that be MCMXCVIII? Some guidance would have been useful; 23 centuries after the invention of Roman numerals, confusion reigns as to how they should be used to indicate the year 1999. Page 1

Missing girls hunt

Police are hoping that the discovery of a car belonging to a runaway couple who vanished with their two foster daughters will be a breakthrough. Page 7

Migraine danger

YOUNG women who suffer from migraines are three times more at risk of a stroke. The danger increases if they smoke, take oral contraceptives or have high blood pressure. Page 7

Hostage pressured

SECRET police forced a survivor of the Yemeni hostage massacre to change his testimony about how his wife died in the bungled rescue attempt, to remove any suggestion that Yemeni troops fired the fatal shot. Page 9

Clinton holiday

The Clintons are seeing in the new year as usual at the upmarket resort of Hilton Head, off the coast of South Carolina. They have joined a crowd of other high achievers assembled for the annual off-the-record Renaissance Weekend. Page 12

Railway sued

A Jewish Frenchman whose parents were deported by train and murdered by the Nazis at Auschwitz in the Second World War is suing the state-owned French railway for alleged "crimes against humanity". Page 13



Common seal pups at the seal hospital in Scarborough Sea Life Centre after rough seas had left them stranded on the shore

City fear: London is stepping up its

campaign to win over hearts and minds among Europe's financial movers and shakers and prevent the City from losing its long-held pre-eminent place as Europe's financial centre. Page 40

Cricket: Ashley Giles, the Warwick-

shire slow left-arm bowler who arrived in Australia on Tuesday as part of England's one-day squad, has been added to the party for the final Test when England have to win to draw the series. Page 21

Football: Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal

coach, gave a warning that the FA Carling Premiership was in danger of taking over from Italy's Serie A as the chosen abode for footballing cheats. Page 21

Tennis: Petr Korda said that he had

postponed his retirement after the findings of a positive drug test were recently made public. Page 22

Rugby union: By the end of the sea-

son players in England should be in no doubt that the employers will control the market. Page 25

Déjà vu: Two things strike Rich-

ard Morrison about the cultural revolution of the 1990s. The first is that it is a revolution. Satellite, cable, digital and now interactive television, the home computer and the Internet — all these have changed leisure habits irrevocably. Page 29

Bear-baiters: Benedict Nightingale

salutes a trio of Soviet playwrights who dared to defy Stalin, and paid the price. Page 29

Reveries from the grave: David Sin-

clair reviews the hits made up of songs that had sold millions for the likes of George Michael, Phil Collins and U2. Page 30

These we will love: Caitlin Moran

forecasts the rise of Beth Orton, the emergence of the Beta Band, and the return of Oasis. Page 31

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

GIFT OF READING

Valerie Grove on why the reading bug is the best gift you can give your children

WRITE STUFF

Enter meg's young writer's competition and win £500 worth of children's books

Preview: A look at some favourite children's programmes (BBC1, 4.05) Review: A rare interview with Stanley Baxter. Pages 38, 39

Pride of nations

Today Europe takes the biggest step ever towards unification. Outside EMU Britain may rediscover its historic role as a great trading nation, deeply involved in Europe, but always independent and looking outwards. Page 17

Green sprouts

Rachel Carson's fierce polemic *The Silent Spring*, helped to plant the seeds of an environmental movement that flourished in the 1970s. The West took its first serious look beyond the moment, beyond the next set of economic figures, to a more distant future. Page 17

Roman types

Debate is raging as to how 1999 should be written in Roman numerals. But despite the confusion, the use of these ancient numbers is still valid. Page 17

ANTHONY HOWARD

The BBC remains an Establishment organisation at heart. Present its most talented film-makers with even the most antiquated and outdated part of our national fabric — and their automatic instinct will be to celebrate it. Page 16

MARY-ANN SIEGHART

It was for Christmas 1997 that my husband gave me a pair of Rollerblades. Ever since, I have enjoyed a lasting enthusiasm. Page 16

PAUL SYKES

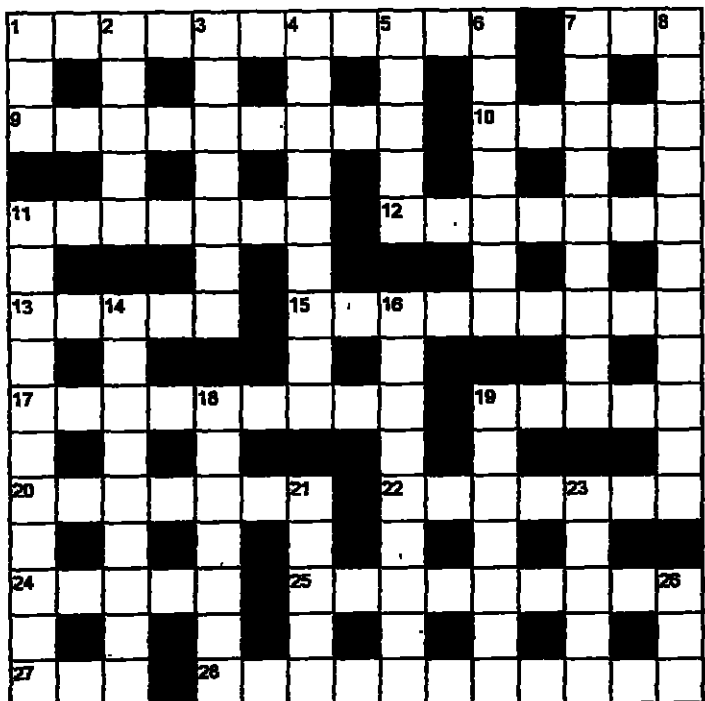
No one pretends we don't have problems, but they are not remotely of an order to compel us to abandon self-government. Page 16

Michael Shearer, courier; Sir Harold Kent, treasury solicitor; William Allen, architect; Bryan MacLean, singer. Page 19

Britain and "Euroland": decline in wild birds; Mandelson's fall; avalanche; yachting pioneers. Page 17

3, 13, 18, 24, 34, 49, Bonus: 33

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,989



- ACROSS
- First issue in 1999, for example (5,6)
 - Insect likely to be problematic in a year (3)
 - Religious system uniting man and woman (9)
 - Love in Paris that would be non-U in Rome? (5)
 - What investigator says producing expression of amazement (1,3,3)
 - Immediate response in letter I posted (7)
 - Test depth of Channel (5)
 - Diver retrieved piece for explosive device (5,4)
 - Invalidate right to make changes on record (9)
 - Musician with piano in place of seaside entertainment (5)
 - News that is initially brought by sound of bells (7)
- DOWN
- Every course provides this sort of bet (4,3)
 - American and I leave China, for Spain (5)
 - Standard criticism attached to London police (9)
 - She just makes it into the first eleven (3)
 - Arrived early this morning. I, tired off street to get drunk? (5,6)
 - Seize illegal substance (3)
 - Thoughts of leader of assassins during fatal day? (5)
 - Tried to get editor to join paper (7)
 - Not fully understood how one's lacking basic domestic facilities (9)
 - One who acquires a farm building (as opposed to cellar, say) (5)
 - Again request harvest work (7)
 - Servant with carriage that helped to get Wellington on (9)
 - Politicians following Eden into social gathering (6,5)
 - Advantageous position — not the first part of record? (6,5)
 - Encouragement after slipping up, for example, about platform (3,4,5)
 - Improperly assigned to throne before time in succession (2,3,4)
 - Put down 'phone — no longer engaged? (4,3)
 - One accepted by Constable as like-wise a great artist (7)
 - Sounds like sort of horse, one that starts nervously (5)
 - Bridge-player's abandoned this? (9)
 - Child that's looked after by nanny (5)

Solution to Puzzle No 20,988

SAVEONESBACON
TJRMRAEB
ENCLASHAPPEAL
WACRDAYV
ARRAYABSORBENT
RISSEIH
DOORNAIR ESCAPE
UESBO
CUSTODIAN TRANSMIT
EPAIR
CUSTODIAN PASTA
ICRGRSP
DIUCSEPOLISE
ETSSOZ
SUTIONTHEPENCE

Times Two Crossword, page 40

Latest Road and Weather conditions

UK Weather - All regions 0336 444 910
UK Roads - All regions 0336 401 410
Inside PDS 0336 401 744
PDS and Link Roads 0336 401 747
National Motorways 0336 401 748
Central Europe 0336 401 749
Channel crossing 0336 401 750
Motorway to Heathrow & Gatwick airports 0336 407 805

Weather by Fax

Dial 0336 followed by your number from your fax
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Wales 416 332 London 416 343
Ireland 416 338 National Satellite
Fax 416 337 Weather 416 337
N. Ireland 416 338 pictures 416 337
Scotland 416 340
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Europe Country by Country 0336 401 885
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Dismantled Parts 0336 401 889
Le Shuttle 0336 401 892

Car reports by fax

New and used car reports from the AA sent by fax
Dial from your fax handset, you may have to set to poll receive mode
Automobile Association Development Ltd.
Buckley House, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 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FRIDAY JANUARY 1 1999

Warwickshire left-armer hurriedly brought into party in place of Croft

England call on Giles for spin option

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN SYDNEY

AT THE end of a tumultuous week, England have come up with a showstopper. Determined that they should not have the thunder of their Melbourne victory stolen by Australia conjuring up Shane Warne for the final Test in Sydney starting tomorrow, England produced their own spin surprise yesterday, direct from wintry Warwickshire.

Ashtley Giles's life story is not quite the soap opera that Warne claimed his to be. Indeed, he is so anonymous on the world stage that the press conference he conducted yesterday was halfway through before the Australian journalists present worked out who he was.

The only valid comparison between Warne and Giles is the unflattering one that both are prone to putting on weight. Yet England have decided that this journeyman slow left-armer may have an influential role in their bid to square the series by winning here for the first time in 20 years.

Giles, who arrived in Australia on Tuesday as part of the one-day squad, has officially been added to the Test party, and the prospect of a quite staggering selection later gained tacit acknowledgement from the team management.

While Giles practises in Sydney today, Robert Croft will play in a limited-overs game at

TEAMS

ENGLAND (from): A J Stewart (captain), M A Atherton, M A Butcher, N Hussain, M R Rampersad, G A Hick, J P Crawley, W K Hogg, R D S Croft, F Giles, D W Hasleley, D Gough, A D Mally, P M Such.

AUSTRALIA (from): M A Taylor (captain), M J Slater, J L Langer, M E Waugh, S R Waugh, D S Lehmann, I A Healy, S K Warne, S C G MacGill, D W Fleming, C R Miller, G D McGrath.

Sir Donald Bradman's native village of Bowral, Croft is crestfallen, as well he might be. He has already had to accept the loss of his senior spin bowling role to Peter Such, but finding himself further relegated by someone who was not even chosen for the tour is the height of indignity.

The faith in Giles, 25, is a further indictment of the quality of slow bowling in England. He has made his reputation bowling economically in one-day cricket and is not a big spinner of the ball. He was unfortunate to play his only previous Test on a moribund pitch at Old Trafford last July, taking one for 106 against South Africa. But there was a little promise of better to come.

Giles is not yet sure to play, for a number of permutations remain open. Even the possibility, though, is a remarkably frank admission that the initial selection was flawed. The only point in including

two spinners rather than just one was that both might play on a turning pitch in Sydney. Now that theory has been abandoned. Of course, Giles offers something different but the selectors knew that when they omitted both him and Philip Tufnell last September. To even consider throwing in a bowler whose activity in the past three months consists of a few indoor nets in Birmingham smacks of desperation.

Alec Stewart, the captain, had not looked at the Test pitch by last night but suggested that England would play only four bowlers. "We haven't discounted two seamers and two spinners," he said, opening up all kinds of other bewildering possibilities.

Assuming that Darren Gough will lead the attack, England would then have to exclude either Alan Mullally, who has been much their best containing bowler, or Dean Headley, whose wickets won them the game in Melbourne.

Angus Fraser is definitely demoted again but the only way in which England could field three seam bowlers, and still play their two spinners, would be through Stewart captaining, keeping wicket and opening the batting. Last night, he was still resisting such an option. "It's highly unlikely we would do that," he said. But in this of all weeks, no one would bet against it.

After a free day at their beachside hotel, England will be practising early and trying to resolve selections they cannot afford to get wrong. High on their list of worries was the continuing poor form of Michael Atherton, who is averaging 16 in the series. Stewart admitted: "It's been disappointing, because we generally have a good captaincy and he's been all day, it guarantees us a good total. It's difficult to say what his problem is and he can't put his finger on it but he played very well in the summer and can do so again."

Atherton may be inspired by the ground on which he made his first overseas Test century, eight years ago, following it with scores of 88 and 67 in the corresponding game in 1995. Right now, he needs inspiration from somewhere. Stewart sharply resisted the



Giles, who took only one wicket in his previous Test at Old Trafford last summer, could be thrust into action tomorrow

Pakistan players face mounting evidence

A JUDICIAL commission yesterday warned Wasim Akram and Saifur Rahman, two former captains of Pakistan, that there was enough evidence to punish them over allegations of match-fixing. Twelve players had been summoned over the allegations but only eight responded, according to Ali Sibtain Fazli, the Pakistan Cricket Board's legal adviser.

The commission issued bailable warrants against Rashid Latif, a wicketkeeper, for his failure to turn up for cross-examination, Fazli said. Rashid, who is attending to his sick

father, criticised the working of the commission in a press interview on Wednesday. Fazli said: "His remarks can come under contempt of court and the judge was furious."

Wasim, Malik, Ijaz Ahmed, Mushtaq Ahmed and Waqar Younis — all allegedly involved in match-fixing and betting — yesterday cross-examined their accusers.

Azmir Sohail, the present Pakistan captain, Aqib Javed, the fast bowler, and Intikhab Alam, the former team manager, who had accused the players of involvement in illegal practices, were in court.

suggestion that it might prove to be Atherton's farewell Test. "People wrote him off when he gave up the captaincy and he gave a hundred in his next Test," he recalled. "He'll keep playing and he'll feature strongly against New Zealand next summer."

Nasser Hussain should return to No 3, from where he ought not to have been moved, and Mark Ramprakash, England's leading batsman in the series with an average of 58, will come in next. Graeme Hick will feel he is owed a century here, Atherton having infamously declared with him

on 98 four years ago, but it is the sixth batting position that could see another surprise. Mark Butcher, the only Englishman to make a century in the series until Stewart's 107 in Melbourne, has been marginalised both by his own ailing form and Stewart's return to the head of the order. Against the spin attack promised, John Crawley may now be reprieved from a miserable tour to win another cap at No 6.

Two days before the game begins, the pitch had more grass on it than might have been expected but also contained some cracks and bare

patches. The Australians are so convinced it will turn that they are favouring three spin bowlers, the leg breaks of Warne and Stuart MacGill augmented by the off spin of Colin Miller, who will also double up bowling seamers.

Sydney is a city in a state of obsessive upheaval as it prepares for the Olympics next year. Tomorrow, though, attention will briefly return to cricket and the ground will be a throng of expectancy. There is suddenly a series in doubt. Warne is back, and there may even be some chap called Giles playing.

Wenger, though, did not join the ongoing debate about the inconsistency of refereeing, which Alex Ferguson raised again in the wake of the failure of Mike Riley to dismiss Frank Leboeuf during Chelsea's match with Manchester United on Tuesday. Instead, he expanded on a sort of disciplinary blueprint he has formulated in his mind, an antithesis of a cheats' charter.

"Players who go down in the area without being fouled and looking for a penalty should be shown the red card immediately," Wenger said. "If it happens anywhere else on the pitch, they should be booked. It is hard for referees without video evidence, but there is a way around that, too."

"One solution would be to send a copy of every Premier League game for review. Any player who was caught on video cheating could be given a red card retrospectively and suspended accordingly. It happens in France. If you show players cards for this behaviour, they will stop doing it."

"Instead, we have a situation now where Patrick has reached the stage where he does not know what to do any more. He is very down. If he had to go elsewhere to get away from this kind of thing, it would be a sad day for English football. I hope it does not come to that."

Wenger demands action over 'divers and cheats'

By OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

STILL smarting from the latest controversial addition to his club's disciplinary roll of shame, Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, last night launched a scathing attack on the ethical degeneration of English football and warned that the FA Carling Premiership was in danger of taking over from Italy's Serie A as the chosen abode for cheats.

Wenger's criticism was prompted by the dismissal of Patrick Vieira, his France midfielder, against Charlton Athletic at The Valley on Monday. Vieira was shown the red card after he had elbowed Neil Redfern, who collapsed theatrically to the ground clutching his face. Replays showed, however, that Vieira had made contact only with his chest.

Wenger, angered by the apparent refusal of Uriah Rennie, the referee, to reconsider his decision even in the light of video evidence, said yesterday that Vieira, no stranger to trouble since his move to Highbury from AC Milan 2½ years ago, was bewildered by his treatment. Wenger is worried that what he saw as persecution of Vieira might drive him away from England.

The Arsenal manager also made it plain that he saw Redfern's actions as symptomatic of a trend in the English game that is fast undermining its reputation as the home of foot-

ball that may be breathless and uncompromising but is, above all things, honest and fair. Foreign players had led the way, he said, but their English colleagues were following their lead.

"The problem of diving is growing in England," Wenger said, "and I do not like it. I always used to like watching English games because there was none of that. But now it is growing more and more prevalent. I sometimes sit at home and watch Italian football on a Sunday afternoon and I have to change over and watch the English division one game because in Italy the players are falling down all the time. Now, it is happening in the Premiership, too."

"Patrick did not deserve to be sent off, but Redfern cheated - the referee. I agree that usually Redfern is not that type of player, but maybe he wanted Charlton to win so much, he was prepared to do anything. Patrick caught him in the chest, but he went down holding his face. It was only a

red card because it was Patrick who was involved. "I accept that the referee may have been misled and that he felt that Patrick had caught Redfern in the chest, but what disappoints me more is that he will not reconsider."

RED MIST

Several players sent off since Arsenal Wenger became manager in August 1998:

1998-99: Nov 28: S Bould (v Liverpool), Nov 30: T Adams (v Newcastle United), Dec 21: I Wright (v Nottingham Forest), Jan 1: J Harrison (v Middlesbrough), Jan 11: D Bergkamp (v Sunderland), May 11: Adams (v Derby County).

1997-98: July 30: P Vieira and M Upson (v PSV Eindhoven), Oct 14: J Crook (v Birmingham City), Oct 26: E Platt (v Aston Villa), Jan 17: Vieira (v Coventry City), Feb 16: Vieira (v Charlton), Mar 7: Bergkamp (v West Ham United).

1996-97: Aug 25: Platt (v Charlton Athletic), Sept 21: L Dixon (v Chelsea), Sept 28: J Kilmartin (v Sheffield Wednesday), Nov 25: R Parfitt (v Luton), Dec 20: G O'Sullivan (v Leeds United), Dec 28: Vieira (v Charlton Athletic).

If he won't look at it again, then it tells me he does not care. He just thinks he is right. "Maybe some foreign players have brought this kind of behaviour into the country but some English players are picking it up very quickly. No mat-



Wenger believes Vieira has become a target for referees

Tomorrow in the SATURDAY TIMES



"Relegation with Middlesbrough was a shock because I thought I was a good manager. Now I've got my belief back"

MANAGING VERY NICELY NOW
Bryan Robson talks to OLIVER HOLT



WHAT A WEEK!
FRANK LEBOEUF on friends, foes and fouls

13 pages and the finest columnists:
Alyson Rudd, Michael Lynagh, Lynne Truss, Robert Elms and Simon Barnes

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Majestic Meissnitzer carrying all before her

John Hopkins
meets the
Austrian who has
been leaving
her rivals trailing

The World Cup circus has been winding its way through the Alps for almost a month now and at almost every stop Austrian men and women are establishing a rare dominance.

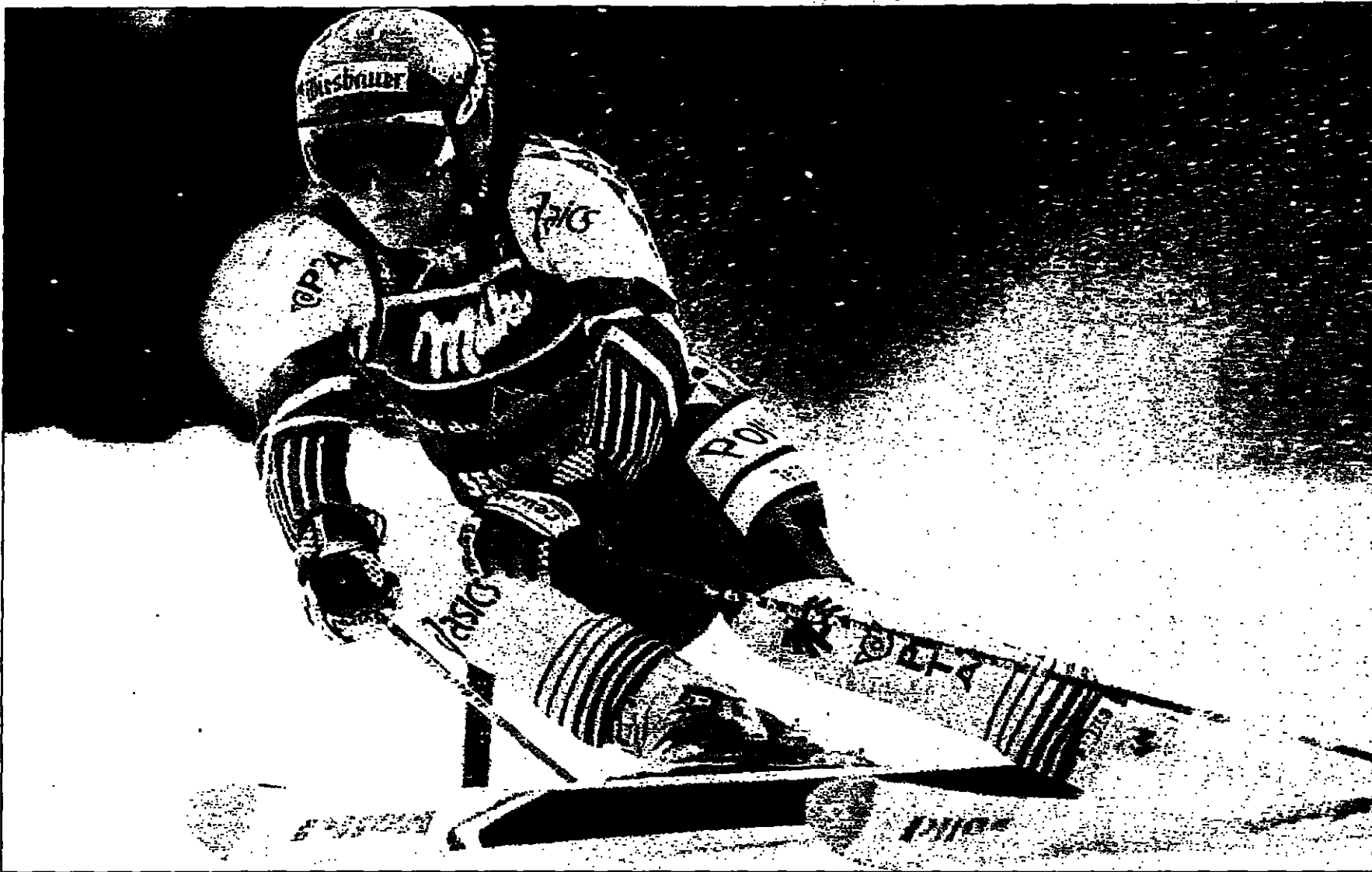
In the men's events Hermann Maier is performing as if his life depended on it. Maier, the double Olympic gold medal-winner, and his compatriots made history before Christmas by taking the first three places in a World Cup super-giant slalom at Innsbruck. Last Tuesday, Maier and company confirmed that was no fluke by taking eight of the top ten places in a downhill in Bormio, Italy.

Alexandra Meissnitzer, who, carving her turns and gliding with ease from victory to victory, is leading the way for Austria's women and has already built up a 325-point lead over Martina Ertl, of Germany, in the World Cup.

Meissnitzer has had five victories in three different disciplines and three further podium places. The 25-year-old is favourite to continue her domination by winning a super-giant slalom in Maribor, Slovenia today.

In Austria, Christmas Eve is the day when they gather to celebrate and Meissnitzer made sure she was at home with her parents and her younger brother and sister, in Abtenau, to celebrate. Her father, a mechanic, and her mother were busy themselves with last-minute chores before the family sat down to the traditional dish of fish.

"Here, this is a big house," Meissnitzer said in her excellent English, as light snowflakes fell outside. "On the second floor I have my own living room and bedroom. I still have my parents for washing my clothes and cooking dinner. We have a good relationship. I do not hide anything from them and they treat me responsi-



Meissnitzer competes in the women's giant slalom at Semmering last Sunday. She suffered a rare defeat but extended her World Cup lead in the process

bly. It is best for me. I am three minutes by car from a chair lift."

Abtenau is a village in Salzburg, one of Austria's nine provinces, the part of the country that has taken over from St Anton as the new breeding ground for Austrian ski champions.

Maier was born in Flachau, a village in a narrow valley not far from Abtenau, and Andreas Schifferer, winner of four World Cup downhills, comes from

Radstadt, a few miles away. Also in the Pongau region is Weinarl where the great skier Ann-Marie Moser-Proll has a café.

So a friendship and rivalry among local friends has contributed to Austria's success. So, too, have the techniques of Chifong, taught to Meissnitzer by Werner Tautermann, who also works with Andreas Goldberger, an Austrian ski jumper.

"I used to get excited, nervous, hectic," Meissnitzer said. "I would be a good skier in training and then not reproduce it in a race. Werner has taught me how to remain calm. If I am first in the first run, that is no problem. I can handle any situation. Good results have built my self-confidence."

Gliding has not been a strength of Meissnitzer's skiing but this weakness has been improved recently by the use of skis supplied by Völkl after Atomic, the Austrian

manufacturer, elected to sponsor the Germany women's team. Then there are the techniques of Karl Fehrer, the Austria women's coach, who used to train the Switzerland men's team.

Well-trained, fit and supported generously by a ski federation with an eye on the publicity for the country's tourism industry, the Austria skiers have an air of happiness and satisfaction about them.

"We had very good summer training on the glacier in Zermatt," Meissnitzer said. "We have a good federation with plenty of money and good trainers. Maybe some of the other teams do not have the same money as we do. I don't know exactly why Austria is so dominant at present, but I like it. I train with Anita Wachter in the Gs, with Sabine Egger in the slalom and Renate Götschl in the downhill and super-G. They are



Meissnitzer: dominant

among the best in the world. If in training you are doing the same times as these skiers, you know you're good."

Meissnitzer was three years old when she first slid and, almost from that moment, her ambition was to become a racer. "Petra Kronberger was my hero," Meissnitzer said. "I saw her winning all the time and I thought it was very impressive that she did it all so quickly. I watched her until she quit when I was 18. She was most impressive. She was always doing the right thing. In training, even though she was the best, she always did more work than anyone else. I am one who must work really hard. I know I have a gift from God to ski well but so have others."

Meissnitzer skis the downhill, giant and super giant slalom disciplines and generally wins them too, though Wachter inflicted a rare defeat on her in a giant slalom in Semmering last Sunday. Two days later Wachter suffered small tears to her right ankle in training, and is doubtful for the technical events at Maribor.

"Alexandra has lots of self-confidence and knows what to do," Wachter said last month. "She is clearly the favourite for the season. She is so strong in the head." Deborah Compagnoni, the Italian skier, added: "In racing, the mental side of the sport is as important as the physical side. It is difficult to remain in form at the highest level for any length of time but for now Alexandra certainly has it."

SAILING

Soldini is on course to redeem himself

By EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

AFTER his dreadful performance in the first leg, Giovanni Soldini, the maverick Italian single-handed, was on course to restore lost pride with an impressive win in the second leg of the Around Alone Race yesterday. Barring the unexpected, Soldini should bring FTA into the finish at Auckland today.

The Italian was clearly unnerved by getting his routing so badly wrong in the first leg and will be delighted to have found his form over the demanding 7,000-mile traverse of the southern Indian Ocean. Having arrived in South Africa in fifth place and nearly three days behind Mike Golding, the Briton leading the race, Soldini was last night looking able to reduce that deficit by a day.

Soldini apart, however, this leg is proving another excellent one for Golding, who can afford to lose a bit of time to his Italian rival. His main aim was to increase his leverage over Isabelle Autissier, who was 2½ hours behind him into Cape Town, and Marc Thiercelin, who was ten hours behind. Yesterday Golding was 200 miles behind Soldini but 250 ahead of Autissier and Thiercelin, who are battling for third and fourth places.

With 400 miles still to sail to Auckland, the confident Golding was already planning his campaign for the third leg. "I want to get in, not so much for the break, but so we can fix the boat and carry on," he said. "It's frustrating sailing with so many small breakages."

The other outstanding performance of this leg has been that of J. P. Moulligne, the Frenchman who has sailed a masterful race in his Class 2 Open 50, *Cray Valley*. It is a slower boat in most conditions than Mike Garside's *Magellan* Alpha, yet with 670 miles to go to the finish, Moulligne has a comfortable 460-mile cushion over his British rival.

What is more, the Frenchman is just a few miles behind Autissier and Thiercelin and a long way ahead of Josh Hall, of Great Britain, although each of them has more powerful machinery than he has. Garside was not afraid to congratulate Moulligne yesterday as he chased him across the Tasman Sea. "I am totally impressed," he said. "J. P. has sailed a flawless race."

Drugs case forces world No 13 to delay retirement in order to clear his name

Korda seeks clean break by playing on

PETR KORDA announced yesterday that he had planned to retire from tennis this Christmas, but has since changed his mind after the findings of a positive drug test have recently been made public. The Czech No 1 arrived here to begin preparations for the Qatar Open, a tournament that he won in 1996 and again last year.

The Qatar Open is the first event in which Korda has played since the International Tennis Federation (ITF) fined him \$94,529 (£57,000) and deducted 199 ranking points after testing positive at Wimbledon for the banned steroid nandrolone. The 1998 Australian Open champion has now vowed to continue playing for at least another year in a bid to clear his name.

Korda, 30, decided that 1998 would be his final year on the circuit after he had won back-to-back tournaments in Qatar and Australia earlier this year. "I wanted to play the season and then retire, but I couldn't retire in such circumstances," he said yesterday. "I now just want one or two more years to show people what Petr Korda is capable of on the tennis court."

Korda remains confident of his innocence and, despite a guilty verdict from the ITF, he believes that the failure to impose a ban demonstrates that they believed his defence that no substance was consciously taken. "I have never cheated and I have never taken any steroid to increase my perform-

ance on the court," Korda said. "When I first heard the news I thought it was a bad joke, and it became a very difficult time for me and my family."

"But now I am very happy with the decision of the committee, which has shown that I am innocent because I didn't knowingly take anything to raise my performance. I am 100 per cent natural and not into anabolic steroids."

Korda remains baffled as to how the traces of nandrolone showed up in the samples that he gave at Wimbledon after

Jon Green in Doha finds the Czech tennis player protesting his innocence despite positive steroid test

losing his quarter-final match against Tim Henman. "I did injure my foot that week but all the evidence that I've been able to piece together shows that everything I took was clean," he said. "When I have an injection I always ask what is in it, but sometimes you just have to

trust the person who administers it. If I had any knowledge about how I came into contact with the steroid then I could set out to clear my name. But now I suppose I will always have a black mark on my back for the rest of my life and never be able to clean it off. I know that not many people be-

lieve me, but I have to defend myself and continue saying that I did not take anything."

The world No 13 maintains that he remains fully supportive of the anti-doping programme that is carried out by both the ITF and the Association of Tennis Professionals, to ensure that tennis remains a relatively untainted and drug-free sport.

However, it is likely that many within the game will question the message sent to the rest of the tennis community by the decision not to ban

Korda. Goran Ivanisevic, who arrived here on Tuesday to compete in the \$1 million event, said that if a player is guilty of taking nandrolone then he should be handed a ban, regardless of the circumstances.

"Last year I was tested nine times and I can tell you, it's a pain," he said. "The players will question tests continuing if no serious action is brought for a positive test."

He denied, though, that there would be ill-feeling between the other players and Korda. "Yes, it's not good for Petr and the ITF to sort out."

Korda's long-term aim is to get a full statement released by the ITF highlighting their complete findings rather than the edited version released on December 22. However, his first objective is to forget his problems and enjoy a successful beginning to the 1999 season.

"Winning the 1998 Australian Open was a dream come true, and of course anything is possible. I haven't lost the touch and I haven't lost the feel. My goal is to enjoy the tennis and if I enjoy it then I can always get some tremendous results. I wanted to get to No 1 last year and I got very close."

"The players that I most admired from back home were Ivan Lendl and Martina Navratilova, and they were playing their best tennis when they were between the age of 26 and 30. I'm still in that age group."



Korda believes he can put the controversy behind him and rediscover the form that brought him two titles last year

MOTOR RACING: BRITISH TEENAGER TIPPED TO COMPETE IN FORMULA ONE WITHIN THREE YEARS

Prolific Button destined to reach top of tree

By KEVIN EASON

IT IS a label that has tarred many a young driver on his struggle through the ranks to the golden prize of Formula One. But to many experts in motorsport, whose world is geared to finding the next great talent to rank alongside Ayrton Senna, there is simply no doubt about the quality of Jensen Button.

Anyone who has worked with him or watched his flashing talent on the track is convinced that Britain has produced the young man who will lead the next generation of Formula One drivers. Button, 18, is saddled with the onerous task of following a line of British Formula One world champions, that started with Mike Hailwood and ended with Damon Hill in 1996.

He is unlikely to have to wait long for his chance, for a test in a McLaren is now looming after But-

ton was named this year's McLaren Autosport British Racing Drivers' Club Young Driver.

Ron Dennis, McLaren's team principal, is convinced that Button is on his way to Formula One, perhaps within three years. Dennis said: "All the ingredients are there with Jensen. It is up to him. Three years is an ambitious schedule but it is achievable. We are aware of Jensen's ability and we have spoken to him already about his future."

Button has fired his way to the top with an astonishing record of success in karting, and the Formula Ford title this year at his first attempt. After becoming the youngest Super A Kart Champion of Europe, Paul Lemmons, his GKS Tecno team manager, said: "In my 25 years in karting, there have been only two drivers of such outstanding ability: one was Ayrton Senna, the other Jensen Button."

Button, from a village just outside Bath, starts next year with £50,000 worth of prize-money in his sponsorship pocket to fund a campaign in Formula Three, traditionally the conveyor belt to Formula One. His new bosses at the Renault-backed Pransme team were handed convincing evidence of his potential in his first test, his first drive in a Formula Three car. Within ten laps, he was half a second off the lap record at the French Magny-Cours grand prix circuit.

While Button was convincing in France, Justin Wilson was stunning in Italy on his first outing in a Formula 3000 car. Wilson has found the progression tougher than Button, relying on his father, Keith, a garage owner, to finance his career through karts and Formula Vauxhall, where he was with Paul Stewart Racing. The struggle is relative, though: Wilson is still only 20 and this year

achieved his breakthrough by winning the inaugural Formula Palmer Audi championship, his prize for victory being a season in Formula 3000. "It is very difficult because there is so much competition at every level and from so many countries now," Wil-



Button: astonishing record

son, from Sheffield, said. "Finding the money is always difficult and, if it hadn't been for Palmer Audi, I would not have made it into F3000. It is my chance to impress."

Neither Peter Dumbreck nor Jonny Kane could find the money to keep them in Britain. In Dumbreck's case, a move to Japan has brought the success and exposure he yearned for. The Scot, 25, won the Japan Formula Three championship and topped off his season with victory in the prestigious Macau Grand Prix. Executives at Mercedes were quickly on the telephone for his services.

Kane, 25, from Northern Ireland, is off to America after running out of money and hope at home. The former British Formula Three champion has secured a seat in the US PPG Dayton Indy Lights series with Team Kool Green, which runs Darjo Franchitti, of Scotland, in the rival CART championship.

CRICKET

Tshwete renews attack on selectors

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

INSTEAD of dancing in the streets, South Africa's triumph over West Indies has provoked a political row. Steve Tshwete, the Sports Minister, criticised the national selectors after South Africa had completed their third successive Test victory over the once-mighty touring team on Tuesday, clinching the series.

Tshwete said the selectors had not picked enough black cricketers for the fourth Test which starts at the Newlands ground in Cape Town tomorrow. "The series was already in the bag - this was a good opportunity to let a talented youngster have a chance to play," he said. Tshwete claimed that the repeated exclusion of black players from the national side was denying them the chance to improve skills and gain experience.

Ali Bacher, the managing director of the United Cricket Board, said that he was disappointed by Tshwete's comments. He planned to challenge the minister yesterday when the pair attended a black cricket tournament in the Eastern Cape town of Fort Beaufort. "The politicians must have confidence in us," Bacher said.

For Bacher and his fellow cricket administrators, recent criticism has come as a shock. Previously, cricket was hailed as a model sport because of its commitment to black development. Tshwete himself chaired the talks between rival black and white cricket bodies that led to the formation of the United Cricket Board in 1991.

In the past year, however, four "black" cricketers have represented the country, including fast bowler Makhaya Ntini, the first black African to play Test cricket for South Africa.

India are certain to make changes for the third and final Test against New Zealand, starting tomorrow and their openers are under particular threat. Navjot Singh and Ajay Jadeja both failed in the second Test, which India lost by four wickets to go 1-0 down in the series.

Sidhu is one of three players who have not been retained for the five one-day internationals that follow this Test. The other two to go home will be Robin Singh, the pace bowler, and Harbhajan Singh, the off spinner.

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World Cup

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by bees

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FOOTBALL

Clock starts ticking in race to 2006 World Cup

By ROB HUGHES

WHEN Big Ben chimed midnight, the deadline for bids to stage the 2006 World Cup closed with the expected seven candidates officially declared. "From here on," Danny Jordaan, the former footballer and human rights leader who heads South Africa's application, said, "every candidate shares one fear, the fear of losing."

Jordaan has six months, but certainly not until March 2000 when the 24-man executive committee of Fifa, world football's governing body, vote on the issue, to make maximum use of the Mandela appeal. They are united, the football man and the President, who used sport to create the rainbow image of South Africa liberated from apartheid, in believing that Africa has a compelling case, but in 1999

menace commitment to stadiums in Berlin and Leipzig. Moreover, the Fifa voters will feel the warmth of Deutsche Fussball-Rund (DFB) hospitality early in the year that matters, for January 2000 is the centenary of German football, and March 2000 is the month that the executive members decide. There will be a huge show in Leipzig, the birthplace of the DFB. Meanwhile, Germany prefers to ring out the old year in a practical manner, making December 31 the date on which its 20 aspirant World Cup cities give evidence of progress in preparing stadiums to meet Fifa demands.

Franz Beckenbauer, seldom reluctant to remind Fifa members that Germany stuck to the gentleman's agreement that England broke — namely that the DFB supported Euro '96 in England, in return for which Sir Bert Millichip, the then Football Association chairman, pledged support for Germany 2006 — has questioned South Africa's scope to put on a safe, competent World Cup. But Beckenbauer hears, as other insiders do, that Brazil has powerful backing.

The Brazilian bid is there in writing, despite the fact that Ricardo Teixeira, its football president, son-in-law of Joao Havelange, the recently-retired Fifa president, neglected to inform the government in Brasilia that the intention was for real. The dilapidated stadiums in Brazil, and the need for a \$41 billion (£24.7 billion) International Monetary Fund loan to the country, suggest that, sooner rather than later, those planning such a costly venture will seek government support.

Heavy politics, however, can rebound. England hopes that, come voting day, Graham Kelly, Keith Wiseman and the FA millions will be forgotten, but some

FA officials say: "We're long members of the 'Anglo-Saxon' club, and we've got a long history of support. It's a tradition, one member scoffed. 'Well, we haven't forgotten Tony Blair and Jack Cunningham accusing us of a cosy stitch up to hijack support for Germany.' Maybe they were misled by the FA denial over the gentleman's agreement, or maybe they were just trying to win a different election."

THE CONTENDERS

England
Brazil
Germany
Morocco
Egypt
Ghana
South Africa

Mandela hands over the presidency and the emotional value of his presence will begin to ebb away.

That will, to some extent, level the playing field for England and other contenders. It should come down to a basic calculation of the quality of each country's infrastructure and ability to organise a 64-match tournament — a quality that England has in depth. However, those who know Fifa politics must still be aware that South Africa has influence where it counts, inside the committee, and that Germany has the strength of insiders in most meaningful football structures, strength that England has failed to maintain.

Alec McGivern, director of England's 2006 campaign, finished 1998 as he began it, attacking Germany's supposed lack of government support. There is a misconception here, the German government blessed the bid in 1993 and, while it was unlikely to give priority to spending towards a future World Cup during a general-election year, it was not as if the German government has since announced im-



Johnson appears shy but put him on the pitch and the aggressive, confident Antipodean emerges. Photograph: Richard Pohle

Johnson lets feet do the talking

Russell Kempson meets the Watford player trying to shoot down Tottenham

Richard Johnson, the Watford midfielder player, is not an archetypal Australian. "G'day, mate" and "No worries" do not feature in his vocabulary and he doesn't mention, let alone gloat over, the pre-Melbourne humiliation of the England cricket team.

He might have a mother called Shelagh but he appears quiet, almost shy — the antithesis of the loud, blimey-guzzling Antipodean of dubious descent so loved by whingeing Poms the world over.

Johnson, 24, speaks softly, his voice magnified only by the echo in dressing-room No 1 at the club's training ground in Stanmore, Middlesex. He is courteous, attentive and admits only one concession to brashness — the black BMW Z3 Roadster parked outside. It has caused him grief from envious team-mates but the jealous jibes have long since subsided.

"I got my first decent contract in March so I went out and treated myself," he said. "I've wanted a long time for a nice car. It goes well and although I got a lot of stick from the lads who thought I was a bit flash, it didn't really bother me. It's a great car."

Appearances are often deceptive. Put Johnson on a football pitch and the real Aussie emerges — the confident, aggressive competitor who played rugby league at school with Andrew and Matthew Johns, the Australia internationals. He received his fifth booking of the

season in the 1-1 draw against Norwich City on Tuesday and will shortly take a one-match break at the Football Association's pleasure.

Yet woe betide any defenders who stand off, allowing him the merest sight of goal from any range or angle. One of his four goals this season was described as a "35-yard right-footed screamer", another as "a thundering drive from 20 yards". Another was "hammered home from 20 yards". Johnson laughs, perplexed and almost embarrassed at his ballistic expertise.

"I've had a few of those," he said. "I used to score a lot of goals from distance in Australia. Left foot, right foot, but usually the right. I don't really know why but I seem to have the knack. Scoring with a two-yard tap-in is a recurring dream, rarely fulfilled."

Tottenham Hotspur will testify to his aim. On Jürgen Klinsmann's debut, in a pre-season friendly at Vicarage Road in 1994, Johnson scored with a 35-yard special in the 1-1 draw. Those at White Hart Lane who recall its velocity will be wise to advise George Graham, the

Tottenham manager, before Watford travel to North London in the FA Cup third round tomorrow.

It is a trip that will revive many memories for Johnson, who arrived in England as a wide-eyed teenager eight years ago. He spent three months on trial with Tottenham but was deemed surplus to requirements. "I thought I'd done really well but they told me I wasn't any better than what they had there already," he said. "As it turned out, I was probably better off leaving."

Football is in the Johnson blood. His father, Roy, and mother lived in Preston before emigrating in 1968. Johnson Sr was an apprentice with Preston North End until he moved Down Under after answering an advertisement for players to help form a new league. He started with Sydney Croatia but settled in northern New South Wales on the country's east coast.

Johnson Jr grew up in Kurri Kurri, a town amid the coalfields around Newcastle, in which his father worked, and the vineyards of Hunter Valley. Sport dominated his curriculum at St Peter's Boys' School: he played in the state un-

der-21 league when he was 15 but his education suffered. "I was useless," he said. "It was not for me."

"I wasn't doing any good at school. Dad sat me down one day and said: 'If you want to make anything of yourself in football, England is the best place to be.' So I just packed my bags and got on the plane. If I'd really thought about what I was doing, I'd probably have had second thoughts. I'm glad I didn't."

A dual national, with English and Australian passports, Johnson will become further anglicised when he marries Vanessa Martin — "a lovely Essex girl from Southend" — in June 2000. Yet he is still miffed that he played no part in Australia's World Cup qualifying campaign, ultimately fruitless though it was.

He was watched by scouts of Terry Venables, the then Australia coach, but the call never arrived. This was possibly a consequence of the apparent antipathy between Venables and Graham Taylor, the Watford and former England manager. "I don't know if that had anything to do with it," he said. "I hope not. It was disappointing because I'd been playing really well."

Johnson has not given up hope of international recognition and even if Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, were to call first, he would consider the offer. It might not please the boys back in Kurri Kurri but Hoddle would receive a warm response. No worries.



Old Firm remain Nevin's title spur

By PHIL GORDON

WHEN Pat Nevin left Kilmarnock for Motherwell three months ago, there were plenty of people prepared to tell him he was taking a step down. The upwardly-mobile Motherwell player-chief executive might use this afternoon to argue that both clubs are going in the same direction.

Nevin was drawn to Fir Park by his ambitions for the club, as much as his personal one. Yet, the man dubbed the game's first punk footballer is enough of a romantic to hope that his former and present teams are laying foundations for a genuine challenge to the Old Firm.

It is appropriate that the first football of 1999 should be at Fir Park between these clubs, because both symbolise the brave new era that is being nourished by the Scottish Premier League (SPL). Both are benefitting from the £44 million of Sky Tele-

PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rangers	20	13	4	3	37	17	43
Kilmarnock	20	10	7	3	28	11	37
Celtic	20	9	6	5	28	20	32
St Johnstone	21	7	9	5	24	27	30
Motherwell	21	6	8	7	20	27	26
Aberdeen	21	6	6	9	22	31	24
Hearts	21	6	5	10	22	29	23
Dundee	20	6	5	9	19	29	23
Dundee Utd	21	7	7	7	19	19	23
Cardiff	21	2	11	8	17	33	17

vision money that is dripping down through the SPL to smaller clubs to help them catch up on Celtic and Rangers, and both have contributed to the 11 per cent increase in attendances reported by the SPL.

Kilmarnock, in second place, may possess the points that Motherwell crave, but Nevin believes that Motherwell's people power will soon be a source of envy.

"We're attracting thousands of fans back to Fir Park through the price reduction policy implemented by our chairman, John Boyle," he said. "The most heartening aspect of that has been the kids who are coming. If we can catch them at a young age and get them to support us, rather than Celtic or Rangers, then this club has a chance of growing. Kilmarnock copied our move and got 14,000 people two weeks ago."

Motherwell underlined their ambition by yesterday signing Lee McCulloch on a new three-year contract. The Scotland Under-21 forward scored the equaliser at Aberdeen on Tuesday night that helped Motherwell into fifth place.

Kilmarnock know that victory is essential. Closing the gap on Rangers to three points just 48 hours before the Old Firm do battle would send out a signal that they do not intend to give Dick Advocaat's team an easy passage.

Beardsley comes home to Hartlepool

By GEORGE CAULKEN

WHEN Peter Beardsley embarked on his career as a professional footballer, two decades ago, the Berlin Wall was intact. Margaret Thatcher held the keys to 10 Downing Street and the Soviet Union had not yet been consigned to the history books. By signing for his tenth club yesterday, the former England international could reasonably claim to have aged better than most.

The same cannot be said of his latest port of call, however. When Beardsley scored a hat-trick on his debut for Carlisle United's reserve team in August 1979, Hartlepool United were preparing for another season of mediocrity in the fourth division and, while the name may have altered, they remain there still. Beardsley's signing — initially until the end of the season — represents a timely coup. After an unhappy spell with Bolton Wanderers and a brief reunion with

TRANSFER TRAIL

Aug 1979: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
April 1982: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
Sept 1982: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
March 1983: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
Sept 1983: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
July 1987: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
Aug 1987: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
June 1988: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
Aug 1988: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
Feb 1989: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
Dec 1989: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.
Dec 1989: John Carlisle Ltd (Preston) to Walsley Boys Club.

Kevin Keegan at Fulham, it also returns the forward to his native North East, a significant lure given that his family have remained in the region since his second transfer from Newcastle United — for £450,000 last year. "It's great to be back," he said yesterday. With Hartlepool down to twenty-first in the table after five consecutive defeats, Beardsley's arrival immediately prompted fevered speculation

as to the long-term future of Mick Tait, the club's present manager. A section of supporters have called for Tait's head in recent weeks, although circumstances conspire to suggest that Beardsley will not be his eventual successor. The pair became friends while playing together at Carlisle and though Beardsley had a chance to return to Brunton Park — he had a series of discussions with Michael Knighton, the Carlisle chairman, three weeks ago and was widely expected to become Nigel Pearson's first signing — it was that personal bond which proved the stronger.

"I was lucky enough to play with the boss at Carlisle and he really looked after me then. This is a way to try to help repay him," Beardsley said. Having made little secret of his desire to enter management he also attempted to deflect the inevitable gossip regarding his position. "As long as Mick is here, I'll be here as a player."



Beardsley: love of football

While nothing formal is enshrined in his contract, there will also be a brief to encourage Hartlepool's fledgling players, perhaps in the hope that some of Beardsley's magic will rub off. "The club has put a lot of time and money into developing the youth side and I am looking forward to working with the young players, not only in the first team but also in the reserves and youth team," he said.

Some will suggest that scrabbling about at the foot of the League is an undignified resting place for a man who has won 59 international caps, captained his country and won a host of trophies with Liverpool, as well as finding time to play for Everton, Newcastle, Manchester United and Manchester City via Vancouver Whitecaps and Walsley Boys' Club. Why humiliate himself, they will ask?

The answer will be provided by a packed St James' Park later this month when Newcastle entertain Celtic for Beardsley's testimonial game and by the few hundred extra souls present for the visit of Cambridge United to Victoria Park tomorrow. All would mention qualities such as exuberance, enthusiasm and a love of football. This, after all, is man who still talks of "doing better" as a player. "I've got a few years to go yet," Beardsley, who celebrates his 38th birthday later this month, said.

Altrincham's management team preaching caution

By WALTER GAMMIE

IN THE best traditions of cautious-minded football folk, Bernard Taylor and Graham Heathcote are approaching the new year without making any extravagant predictions for Altrincham. The temptation must have been strong because their side has swept to the top of the UniBond League with 12 victories and two draws in their past 15 matches.

"We've still got the hard part to come," Taylor, the manager, said. "There is still half the season to go. We've got to stay there. Any of the teams in the top five could win the league. They are all good enough. Guiseley, who we play tomorrow, have games in hand in fifth place. It's a very important match."

Yet the 3-0 win at Runcorn on Boxing Day and the 4-1 win at Moss Lane over Marine — watched by a hearteningly large crowd of 1,001 — spoke

NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL

volumes for the confidence of the team. Phil Power, fully fit and firing, scored in both matches and Leroy Chambers scored his eleventh league goal at Runcorn.

Most remarkably, Stuart Coburn, the goalkeeper, scored with a wind-assisted kick down the hill at Canal Street. The ball bounced once and over a helpless Mark Morris in the Runcorn goal. Coburn also saved a penalty, and his form has played a prominent role in the Altrincham revival.

Coburn's presence saw Andy Dibble depart on loan to Barry Town, the League of Wales champions, where he fell victim to an extraordinary injury — suffering severe burns, apparently from lime on the penalty spot, at Carmarthen Town. "We visit-

ed him in hospital," Taylor said. "He's in good spirits, but he's had a skin graft to his chest, and it may be a long time before he plays again."

Dibble's misfortune aside, things appear much brighter for a club that gleaned only four points from its first eight matches. With a ground equipped for the Football League, Altrincham had not hidden their ambition of regaining the Football Conference place lost two seasons ago — but the time spent by Nigel Gleghorn and Brian Kilcline as player-coaches failed to have the desired effect.

The upturn in Altrincham's fortunes coincided with Heathcote taking over the coaching duties at a club with which he has been involved since 1970. "The spirit in the dressing-room is as good as I have known," he said. "It helps when you're winning — but the job is only half done."

ICE HOCKEY

Devils are stung by busier Bees

By NORMAN DE MESSQUITA

CARDIFF DEVILS once again missed out on an opportunity yesterday to maintain their challenge for the Sekonda Superleague, beaten 4-0 by Bracknell Bees in their second successive home defeat.

Two goals apiece from Chris Brant and Paxton Schulte did the job for Bracknell and Richard Gallace, on loan from Slough Jets because of injury to Bracknell's two regular goalkeepers, did much to deny Cardiff.

Bracknell were faster, stronger, more determined and better at all the basic skills than the Devils, who gave what must have been one of their worst performances of the season.

Brant's first goal came after four minutes when he showed sufficient determination to pick up his own rebound and lift it over Derek Harlofsky. Less than four minutes later Schulte completed a neat three-way play with Jeff Johnston and Dale Junkin to make it 2-0.

The only goal of the second period came when Bracknell were on power play and Brant's shot from the blue line was deflected by Schulte.

The Cardiff power play once again showed its ineptitude and failed to score on any of their six-man advantage opportunities. The nearest they came was when Doug McEwen missed an open net



McCosh, of Bracknell Bees, finds himself rendered airborne by the loose stick of Menard, of Cardiff Devils. But it was the Devils who ultimately landed with a bump

when the Devils were on their first power play in the first period, and early in the third, when Steve Thornton shot wide of an open net. A breakaway early in the third period saw Brant complete the scoring for the evening and the only disappointing aspect of Bracknell's point of view came with less than five minutes remaining when Norm Bezaide objected to a slashing penalty,

which was more than justified, by throwing his stick at the referee, for which he received a misconduct penalty and took no further part in proceedings. Bracknell move up into fourth place.

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CHANGING TIMES

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Shepherd suffers Cup blow

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Reading time for Europeans

مركز امن راجستھان

RACING: JOCKEY PUTS TROUBLES BEHIND HIM

Maguire ends year on winning note

ADRIAN MAGUIRE has endured a traumatic week, but he ended the year on a high note with a superb winning ride on Arctic Ground in the Mr & Mrs Tidball Novices' Handicap Hurdle at Warwick yesterday.

Maguire resigned his retainer with David Nicholson's stable two days ago, but he will have no problem in retaining his position among the country's top jockeys.

His popularity has never been more evident, and, having been immediately congratulated by fellow rider, Norman Williamson, as they pulled up, he received a great reception from racegoers on his return to the winner's enclosure.

He did not ride in the following two races but, as he walked out to partner River Bay, who finished second to Cardinal Rule, ridden by Williamson, in the Next Year's The Big One Handicap Chase, he said: "It was nice to get a good reception from the



Webber: long-range double

went 3½ lengths clear at the line.

Winning trainer Paul Webber was at Fontwell, where he was also successful with John Drumm, but his wife, Fiona, said: "It was great to have Adrian on board. 'We had a pretty quiet time until about three weeks ago when the horses suddenly came good."

Nicky Henderson's horses are in cracking form too and Premier Generation gave him his twelfth success in the past 15 days, under Mick Fitzgerald, in the Tiny Tim Novices' Hurdle. Reflecting on the stable's good run, Henderson said: "We're keeping the doctor away and long may it continue. We're not doing anything different, the horses just seem well."

Native Charm made it two out of three this term in the Bob Cratchit Novices' Chase, while Henry Daly moved off the 13-mark for the season when Young Spartacus landed the 49s' Christmas Present Handicap Hurdle.

PLUMPTON

THUNDERER
12.50 Greyton, 1.25 Hawaiian Youth, 2.00 Cool Performance, 2.35 Kelly Mac, 3.05 Brook Bee, 3.35 Nessun Doro.

GOING HEAVY

12.50 DI MARCO (MORNING AFTER) NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (€2,793; 2m 4f) (6 runners)

1 2121 PHAN LESS HASSLE 30 (D.F.S.) T. McGovern 7-12, 2 1911 BALLYBOLLIN 20 (P) M. Page 7-11, 3 2113 GREYTON 14 (S) R. Hines 6-11, 4 1912 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11, 5 1913 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11, 6 1914 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11, 7 1915 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11, 8 1916 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11, 9 1917 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11, 10 1918 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11, 11 1919 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11, 12 1920 NEWBY 27 (M) M. Leveson 5-11.

1.25 TINTO HILL HANDICAP CHASE (€2,851; 2m 5f) (4 runners)

1 402 HANNAH YOUTH 13 (D.F.S.) G. McCourt 11-11, 2 431 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 3 432 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 4 433 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 5 434 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 6 435 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 7 436 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 8 437 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 9 438 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 10 439 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 11 440 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10, 12 441 REGAL AURA 18 (D.F.S.) D. O'Brien 9-10.

2.00 SOUTHERN F.M. RESOLUTION JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE (€4,500; 2m 4f) (4 runners)

1 2001 PERFORMANCE 20 (M) M. D. Hines 11-4, 2 2002 LLOYD OF LONG 13 (D) D. O'Brien 11-4, 3 2003 GHOST PATH 18 (D) D. O'Brien 11-4, 4 2004 HONEY DREAM 16 (D) D. O'Brien 11-4.

4-7 Cool Performance, 3-1 Lord of Long, 5-1 Ghost Path, 2-1 Honey Dream.

LEICESTER

THUNDERER
12.45 Bora Bora, 1.15 Catharine's Way, 1.50 Round Robin, 2.20 Shanavogh, 2.50 Padara, 3.25 Bessie Browne.

GOING: HEAVY (CHASE COURSE GOOD TO SOFT) SIS 7.30AM INSPECTION

12.45 HUMBERSTONE NOVICES HURDLE (€3,392; 2m 4f 110yd) (4 runners)

1 2913 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 2 2914 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 3 2915 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 4 2916 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 5 2917 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 6 2918 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 7 2919 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 8 2920 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 9 2921 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 10 2922 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 11 2923 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11, 12 2924 BORA BORA 15 (S) N. Twiss 5-11.

1.15 NEW YEAR NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (€3,496; 2m 10f) (5 runners)

1 421 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 2 422 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 3 423 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 4 424 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 5 425 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 6 426 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 7 427 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 8 428 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 9 429 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 10 430 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 11 431 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11, 12 432 CATHARINE'S WAY 24 (S) A. Thomas 7-11.

1.50 PARSLEY SELLING HURDLE (€1,842; 2m) (5 runners)

1 2001 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 2 2002 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 3 2003 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 4 2004 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 5 2005 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 6 2006 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 7 2007 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 8 2008 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 9 2009 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 10 2010 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 11 2011 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 12 2012 PHANTOM PARKY 16 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11.

JUNEFIELD PARK

THUNDERER
1.05 Muhands, 1.30 Daunted, 2.05 Such Boldness, 2.40 Jubilee Scholar, 3.15 Shabash, 3.45 Comeoutthefog.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: 6F-1M, LOW BEST SIS

1.05 HANGOVER HANDICAP (€2,185; 1m 4f) (15 runners)

1 113 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 2 114 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 3 115 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 4 116 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 5 117 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 6 118 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 7 119 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 8 120 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 9 121 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 10 122 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 11 123 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 12 124 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 13 125 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 14 126 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 15 127 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 16 128 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 17 129 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 18 130 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 19 131 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 20 132 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 21 133 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 22 134 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 23 135 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 24 136 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 25 137 WALES 11 (D) M. D. Hines 5-11, 26 138 WALES 11 (D) M. D. 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POP 1

THE TIMES ARTS

POP 2

Beth Orton:
one to watch
in 1999

PAGE 31



Kenneth Tynan, with typical swagger, once defined critics as people "who know the way but can't drive the car". Well, it's a point of view — though I fear that if artists and performers started asking critics for directions the Car of Culture would be pranged into the Dutch of Debauch before you could say "oh Calcutta". But if a critic isn't going to pretend to "know the way" on New Year's Day — especially at the start of this Year of Living Millennially — then he never will. So, as you wait for the ritual four aspirins to soothe the throb in your morning-after cranium, let me divert you with a little Janus-like reflection.

Two things strike me about the cultural revolution of the 1990s. The first is that it is a revolution. Satellite, cable, digital, the home computer and the Internet — all these have changed leisure habits irrevocably, especially among the under-30s. Sorting out the implications will be the biggest task facing cultural mandarins and showbiz moguls alike in the next decade. That is, if they want to keep their jobs. Already you can sense the

We went through all this a century ago

panic and the fear as the big entertainment corporations scramble frantically to "police" the Net. That's not surprising. To many people over 40 the pace of this huge technological upheaval is bewildering. The silicon merry-go-round whirls ever faster, but what's it got to do with real life? And what will become of "real" culture — live music, fine books, good conversation — when a little square screen defines our intellectual horizons?

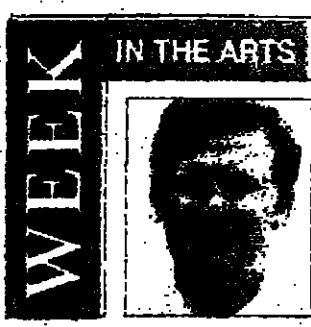
These are commonly expressed worries. So let me make a second, slightly more consoling point. The world has seen all this before. Indeed, there are curious parallels between the cultural mood of the 1990s and the 1890s.

Consider this. In the 1890s, too, ordinary lives underwent a bewildering technological metamorphosis. Much of it was due to electricity, which (like the Internet in our era) had been kicking around academic circles for years, but was suddenly harnessed by inventors

of genius in ways that transformed day-to-day existence. Electric cookers, toasters and kettles all appeared in the 1890s; the vacuum cleaner in 1901. Telephone subscriber dialling was invented in 1896; nine years later Britain had half a million telephones. Marconi sent a radio signal pinging across the Channel in 1898; and Ford built his first petrol-driven car in 1893.

As Wordsworth might have written, to be young in that decade must have been very heaven. But to be middle-aged must have been alarming. "Sir, I have tested your machine," Sir Herbert Beerbohm wrote to the maker of another 1890s "fad", the gramophone. "It adds new terror to life and makes death a long-felt want."

So a hundred years ago we find much the same technological generation-gap as exists today. But there is an even more pertinent observation to be made about that decade: almost nobody came close to predicting the Big Bang in mass



RICHARD MORRISON

entertainment that electricity would bring. That wasn't for want of prophecy: after all, H.G. Wells wrote his best sci-fi yarns in the 1890s. But who could foresee how the Lumière brothers' flickering experiments with moving pictures in a little Paris room would spawn the biggest entertainment industry in history within 15 years? Or how Marconi's cross-Channel bleeps

would lead, just two decades later, to symphonies and speeches being heard in a million homes at once? We stand in much the same relationship to computer science today as those late Victorians stood to electricity. We know we have a powerful new cultural tool, but we delude ourselves if we think we have even the foggiest notion of what wondrous new modes of expression it may spawn. All we can sense is that somewhere, perhaps not yet born, there is a genius who will shape this new medium into a form capable of stirring profound emotions — just as Hollywood's brilliant pioneers quickly evolved "truth 24 times a second" (in Jean-Luc Godard's phrase) out of the Lumière's primitive shadow-play.

But what of the fear that the "living arts" will wither, as the home-entertainment revolution nurtures a generation of couch-potatoes? Again, I take comfort from history. When cinema arrived, pessimists said it would kill live theatre; just

as the gramophone would kill live music. Similarly, television was expected to kill cinema. "Why should people pay good money to see bad films when they can see bad television for nothing?" Sam Goldwyn asked gloomily in 1936.

Yet all survived. The truth is that old art forms rarely die; they merely fade into repeat-mode. Original expression becomes harder and harder; the temptation to refer continually back to a heritage of proven masterpieces, like Orpheus fatally glancing back at Eurydice, becomes ever stronger.

You can see this even in the art forms invented in our century. Last year's big films — a disaster movie and an epic cartoon — could easily have been conceived (if not executed) in Hollywood's earliest years. Television is still obsessed with game-show, cop-drama and soap-opera formats concocted in the Fifties. As for pop music, experts tell us every

week that it is "eating itself" — raiding its back-catalogue with rapturous haste. Little wonder, then, that youngsters are attracted to a medium with no burden of historical "baggage" — the computer.

Of course it is a new medium, to distinguish gimmicks from the truly imaginative. Many will side with John Updike, who sourly observed that modern man is "conditioned to accept newness, whatever it costs". But the mark of civilised individuals is surely that they quickly reject novelty if it has no integrity of content or purpose.

That is as true today as it was for the Victorians, who also struggled to measure integrity in a fast-changing world. Back in 1869 Matthew Arnold declared that the chief task of culture was to "beget a dissatisfaction" with "the common tide of man's thoughts in a wealthy and industrial community", and to "save the future from being vulgarised, even if it cannot save the present". Notions of "vulgarity" have doubtless changed a bit since 1869. Even so, that's not a bad thought to carry into a new year, or a brave new technological world.

The voices Stalin couldn't gag

UNSUNG HEROES: In the last of our series, Benedict Nightingale salutes the courageous dissident playwrights of the Soviet Union

If you wish to feel serious rage on the theatre's behalf, may I suggest the following exercise? Read Isaac Babel's *Myra*, Nikolai Erdman's *Suicide* and Yevgeny Shvarts's *Dragon*. Then ponder the proceedings of the first Soviet Writers' Conference in 1934. Then take an incredulous look at Nikolai Pogodin's *Aristocrats*, which was swiftly proclaimed the dramatic "classic" of the other plays never had a chance of becoming. Thanks to the oppression of the worst, the fate of the best was to be unsung, cast out, even murdered.

For a few years after the Bolshevik coup the Russian theatre led the world in energy and innovation. Handsome subsidies combined with relative permissiveness to give the ageing Stanislavsky, the younger Meyerhold and other producers the opportunity to stage dramatists as diverse as Gorky and Mayakovsky, author of that fierce satire on greed and corruption in the Soviet state, *The Bedbug*.

But in the later 1920s the apparatchiks were already powerful enough to get Bulgakov's *White Guard* withdrawn, for the crime of portraying the class enemy as less than villainous, and his *Flight* banned. And by 1934 Stalin's mighty rump had descended on the theatre, crushing all originality, all creativity.

That was when Uncle Joe's crony, Andrei Zhdanov, approvingly quoted his master's dictum that writers were "engineers of human souls", explaining that "socialist realism" must replace "bourgeois mysticism, superstition and pornography", and suggesting that the new heroes should be "men and women, collective farmers, engineers and members of the Young Communist League". It was also the year when Pogodin decided to treat a tricky subject: the building of the White Sea Canal by the inmates of what was, as it happens, one of Stalin's most notorious labour camps.

'By 1934
Stalin's
mighty
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theatre'

broad scale Comrade Stalin has taught us."

In the real world, a rather truer Bolshevik austerity was already claiming its victims. Mayakovsky had shot himself, Gorky was soon to die in suspicious circumstances, Erdman to be exiled, Bulgakov forced to take a menial job, Shvarts to camouflage his views in fairy-stories, Meyerhold and Babel to be tortured and killed. Others embraced what Babel wittily called "the genre of silence". The loss is incalculable in both the literal and the cliché sense. It is as if James I had taken as strongly against the theatre as against tobacco and smothered Jacobean tragedy in its cradle.

But there are three playwrights who in my view deserve especially to be mourned: three whose dramatic bequests, sadly few though they are, should be remembered and revived far more often than is now the case.

What naive madness impelled Stanislavsky to ask Stalin to override his State Censorship Committee's ban on Erdman's *Suicide*? Given its subversive tenor, it is hardly surprising that the dictator wrote back agreeing with those who found the play "empty and even harmful".

Its anti-hero, driven to the brink of self-slaughter by the unemployment and beset by malcontents chivvying him to kill himself as a public protest against their own disappointment, doesn't just phone the Kremlin to tell "him in charge" he hates Marx. He ends up begging the powers that be "in the name of millions the freedom to whisper, just whisper that life is hard".

Back in 1979 an RSC production of the play showed it to be quirky, energetic and funny enough to justify Gorky's claim that Erdman was "our new Gogol", but in Russia it was as if it had never existed. The new Gogol disappeared into "a poky little hole of a room with a bunk and a tiny table" in the provinces and never wrote for the theatre again. Yet at least he survived into the 1970s, unlike the even more brilliantly gifted Babel, who was summarily executed



Final gesture of despair: Roger Rees plays the central role in the Royal Shakespeare Company's 1980 production of Nikolai Erdman's play *The Suicide*

in 1940 after being arrested on charges of spying that 15 years later the Soviet authorities themselves admitted to have been trumped up.

To understand Babel the lively, impractical, generous man, read Antonina Pirozhkova's *At His Side*, which is his widow's account of his last years and the decade she spent trying to discover whether he was alive or dead. And to gauge the quality of the talent that was wasted, sample his plays *Sundown* and *Myra*. Both team with offbeat observation, but the latter is indisputably a masterpiece, in which black-marketeers, prostitutes, drunken army officers and bewildered representatives of old and new orders giddily wander the chaotic Petrograd of 1920. You won't be surprised to learn that the piece

was banned while it was in rehearsal in 1935.

Shvarts was luckier. At least nobody stopped him writing his children's stories; at least he died a natural death in 1958. But his wonderfully inventive "children's plays for adults", *The Naked King*, *The Shadow* and *The Dragon*, were all taken off as soon as they were staged (respectively 1935, 1940 and 1944). They

were well enough coded for the apparatchiks to believe that the despotic regimes they described were to be found in Nazi Germany or the West. Yet there must have been something about the opportunistic and terrified loathers littering Shvarts's plots that made the censors wary.

They were right. To enter the sinister, paranoid world of *The Shadow* — the king's ministers find it safest to converse in shattering half-sentences while pretending to play chess in the open air — is to experience the danger and unpredictability of Stalinism.

And *The Dragon*, in which Lancelot comes to rid a town of the reptilian tyrant, is even more suggestive. The citizens love their master as much as he despises them. As the monster says: "Cut a man's body in half and he'll peg out. But break his spirit and he'll eat out of your hand. In my town you'll find spirits without arms or legs, spirits in chains, threadbare spirits, dead spirits. I know because I've crippled them."

Even today *The Dragon* remains a touchy play in Russia. You can see why. It shows the awful success of Stalin's human engineering. It shows a slavishness, a craving for a Strong Man, so ingrained that ordinary political surgery cannot remove it. No wonder Shvarts died, as Erdman and Babel did, one of the unsung heroes of the century.

CHILDREN'S THEATRE

age. Why? After all, they do not perform interesting tricks or do anything funny. The answer is that the youngest of them have done a deal with Faith Tingle's pointing, lisp and thoroughly sanctified hag to replace the circus strongman, who is their father and her prisoner, with more appalling flesh.

But that is not the evening's only gratuitous complication. The King of the Fairies is also obsessively pacing the forest in search of his son, who released the witch from her prison when she cried in agony to him and has in turn been incarcerated by her. The show's inadvertent moral is: don't be nice to strangers who seem

kind or appear to be in trouble.

A more advertent theme is the search for the father, who emerges from his three incarnations here as a well-meaning but helpless figure, much victimised by nasty women in black.

But does this clarify or obfuscate a good Grimm tale? Perhaps because they were clearer-minded than me the children in the audience seemed happy; but I found the piece almost as cluttered as the set, which inexplicably consists of piles of books, and even more so than the face of Andrew McDonald's Fairy King, which is so festooned with blackening leaves that it looks as if he has developed Dutch Elm Disease.

Joseph Robinette version of E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web* makes a much more lucid, accessible evening. Nor can you accuse a play about a piglet saved from the knackers by a wily spider of lacking imagination. It is, I suppose, a bit cliche, although Neil Smye's pink, porcine Wilbur is perky enough for that not to matter. It is also a mine didactic, although not in the way one would expect nowadays, since White takes a true carnivore's relish in confronting the tots with the reality of a food-chain that extends to Olivia Carruthers's mild Charlotte: "I eat flies. I drink their blood. It's the way I'm made."

Overall, a tribute to pigs and arachnids that should appeal to people too.

BENEDICT
NIGHTINGALE

Youth comes to the rescue

Although illness forced a complete change in the Wignmore Hall's penultimate concert of 1998, nobody in the audience can have felt let down by the replacement: stepping in for the Brindisi Quartet, the Sorrel Quartet gave a performance to sweep away old year gloom.

Counted among this country's finest young ensembles, the Sorrels — Gina McCormack, Catherine Yates, Vici Wardman and Helen Thather — are no strangers to the Wignmore Hall, but the opportunity to hear them in masterpieces of the repertoire by Haydn, Shostakovich and Dvorak was very welcome.

Their bright tone showed itself right from the buoyant opening of Haydn's Quartet in G major, Op 33 No 3, played with soaring freedom and

RECITAL

Sorrel Quartet
Wignmore Hall

high spirits. So did the sonorous warmth that distinguishes most of their performances: all the detail Haydn packed into the first movement sounded very alive, and if intonation was sometimes less than perfect, that seemed a small price to pay for an interpretation that revelled in the work's surprising twists and turns. This was an account that revealed the Baroque roots of Haydn's Classicism, as well as pointing towards a more assertive Romanticism. The Scherzo was striking for its muscularity.

Dvorak's *American* Quartet is his most popular chamber work, a small-scale equivalent of the *New World* Symphony and about as American: apart from some pentatonic tunes, it owes everything to the composer's homesickness for his native Bohemia.

That sense of yearning dominated the Sorrels' performance of the first movement of the *String Quartet* in D minor, Op 138, the king's ministers find it safest to converse in shattering half-sentences while pretending to play chess in the open air — is to experience the danger and unpredictability of Stalinism.

Another was the dying close of Shostakovich's Fourth Quartet, magnificently judged after the edgy desolation of the work's climax. Indeed, this darkly ambiguous piece was a well-chosen foil to the otherwise upbeat programme: written in 1949, a bad year even by Stalin's standards, it is a score that not all players get inside as well as these did here.

Their big sound was heard to best effect in the opening, which soared lyrically before delivering its sting. They were no less at home in the fragmented waltz of the Andantino, taking us into a world of shadowy nostalgia.

JOHN ALLISON

I flee through flaws, in the flu

Being busier than our counterparts in any country I know, British theatre critics are apt to confuse the fictions flowing through their heads and start reviewing their dreams. But never was that more likely for me than this week, when flu struck.

Did I really see dozens of little spiders fall from the ceiling above me with squeaks of "We like you"? Yes, I did, when I caught *Charlotte's Web* at the Polka. Was I asleep when I was surrounded by kids repetitively screaming "We're not scared" in a Lilliputian version of a Nuremberg rally? No, that happened at the Unicorn Theatre's *Charlotte's Web* at the Arts. Did I actually eat mince pies with Her Majesty on a sunbaked lawn at Bal-

moral? Sadly, that was the dream.

Mark you, Stuart Pateron's version of Grimm's *Charlotte's Web* felt far more dreamlike than that. Actually, it resembled the sort of feverish nightmare celebrated in a famous song in *Johanna*. So much did he elaborate the simple if evocative tale of Hansel and Gretel, their wicked stepmother, their cowardly father, their witch and her oven that I would not have been shocked if W.S. Gilbert's ravenous horde of friends and relations had come pouring aboard at Sloane Square or South Kensington stations.

As it was, the last children encouraged the members of a small circus in the forest. And these supposedly friendly people led Hansel and Gretel to the wicked witch's cot-

age. Why? After all, they do not perform interesting tricks or do anything funny. The answer is that the youngest of them have done a deal with Faith Tingle's pointing, lisp and thoroughly sanctified hag to replace the circus strongman, who is their father and her prisoner, with more appalling flesh.

But that is not the evening's only gratuitous complication. The King of the Fairies is also obsessively pacing the forest in search of his son, who released the witch from her prison when she cried in agony to him and has in turn been incarcerated by her. The show's inadvertent moral is: don't be nice to strangers who seem

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BENEDICT
NIGHTINGALE

POP ALBUMS

Compilation mania

ARTS

JAZZ ALBUMS

Chestnut purée

POP ALBUMS: David Sinclair takes a long, cool look at the Greatest Hits compilations of the year

The biggest of the Best of

No bookie's odds are offered on what will be the Christmas No. 1 album, and the album chart is generally spared the influx of novelty items that invade the singles chart at this time of year. But the album world nevertheless has its own seasonal cross to bear, namely the proliferation of Greatest Hits collections. Last year produced a raft of retrospectives by artists as diverse as James, Lady-smith Black Mambazo, Mariah Carey, Paul Weller, Julio Iglesias, Culture Club, Duran Duran, the Levellers and Dire Straits. But out at the front of a crowded field were four blockbuster albums, every one of which sold comfortably in excess of the biggest-selling Greatest Hits compilation of 1997 (by Eternal).

GEORGE MICHAEL
Ladies & Gentlemen — The Best of
(Epic 491705: two discs, £17.99)
Released: Nov 9. Highest chart position: No 1. Number of Top 20 hits: 19. UK sales to Christmas: 1,200,000

IN 1997 *The Best of Wham!* was one of the top-selling compilation albums, but George Michael dwarfed that achievement with *Ladies & Gentlemen*. A double-album featuring all his hits as a solo act — with the unexplained exception of *Monkey* — it achieved a stranglehold on the top of the chart throughout the last seven weeks of 1998, repelling challenges by Robbie Williams, the Corrs and others. More than just a collection of songs, it has become, like Simply Red's *Stars* before it, a 1990s lifestyle accessory. The album's title and, it sometimes seemed, its entire publicity campaign, was inspired by the singer's brush with a law-enforcement officer in a Californian public lavatory, an encounter which left his stock curiously enhanced everywhere in the world except America. Chewing over the incident with Michael Parkinson, the singer volunteered the thought that "it's the things that are missing that make you a star, not the things that you have".

What is missing from Michael's music is a sense of spontaneity, particularly on the slow ballads which predominate on Disc One (titled *For the Heart*), where his sibilant singing style is maintained to eerie perfection. Disc Two (*For the Feet*) is livelier but, apart from the lounge lyrics, *Ladies & Gentlemen* shows cases a catalogue of songs which conform to the most conservative of pop traditions, ample confirmation that under-



Funny old game, pop: George Michael came out in spectacular fashion, and brought out *Ladies & Gentlemen*, a Best of album that sold shed-loads

neath that peculiar configuration of facial hair, Michael is really an unbuttoned version of Cliff Richard.

PHIL COLLINS
Hit List
(Virgin V2870: £14.49)
Released: Oct 5. Highest chart position: No 1. Number of Top 20 hits: 11. UK sales to Christmas: 900,000

REELING from the conspicuously poor sales of his 1996 album, *Dance into the Light*, Phil Collins needed a reliable banker to stabilise a solo career that seemed to have gone seriously off the rails. *Hit List* did the trick with room to spare, and whatever you may think of Collins's unpretentious pop, this album is an impressive monument to a recorded legacy that has always been more about quality of cut than depth of material.

Perhaps ominously, the only song out of the album's 16 tracks not to reach the Top 20

was *True Colors*, the one new single he released this year. As is often the case with such collections, it looks as if *Hit List* may have drawn a bold line underneath Collins's best years.

U2
The Best Of 1980-1990 & B-Sides
(Island 524612: two discs, £17.99)
Released: Nov 2. Highest chart position: No 1. Number of Top 20 hits: 11. UK sales to Christmas: 900,000

HAVING negotiated a deal that Cresswell would have envied to allow their record company to release a compilation of their hits, U2 took a typically unusual approach to the project, selecting a ten-year timeframe and effectively issuing two editions of *The Best Of 1980-1990*. As well as the basic single-disc version incorporating all the hits from that era, they also released a "limited edition" double-album which

included a disc comprised of B-Sides (exactly how "limited" is not specified, but the quantity already in circulation is greater than the 300,000 copies required to qualify for a platinum disc).

Although they were always prone to the odd pompous flourish — Bono's yell at the start of *New Year's Day* is a spectacular toe-curler — this remains an outstanding body of work by any standards. Brimful of beauty, wit and an evangelical passion, songs such as *Pride (In the Name of Love)*, *With or Without You* and *When Love Comes to Town* have passed the test of time with flying colours.

M PEOPLE
The Best Of
(BMG 74321 61387, £14.49)
Released: Nov 2. Highest chart position: No 2. Number of Top 20 hits: 11. UK sales to Christmas: 800,000

THE only act in this select company to have enjoyed success exclusively in the 1990s, M People have harnessed aspirational lyrics to a modern disco beat with consistently enchanting results, cornering a market that used to be the preserve of Level 42. Heather Small's husky voice sounds even more delectable than you remember on a run of gilded hits including *Search for the Hero*, *Moving on Up* and *One Night in Heaven*.

Roasting on an open-minded fire

CYRUS CHESTNUT

Cyrus Chestnut

(Atlantic 7567-83140-2)

BETTY CARTER may have been jazz's most grievous loss of 1998. But her spirit — if this excellent album and an earlier release by another of her former piano players, Stephen Scott, are anything to go by — lives on in the work produced by her former band members.

She demanded not only whip-smart reactions and musical discipline, but also sensitivity and imagination from her sidemen, and all these qualities are apparent on this, Cyrus Chestnut's third album as a leader. His playing has discernible roots in blues, stride and gospel, and he is versatile enough to operate with equal facility in lyrical/hymnic or rollicking mode. But he is a team player, as his easy meshing with contrasting saxophonists Joe Lovano and James Carter proves.

With faultless rhythm-section work from bassist Ron Carter and drummers Billy Higgins and Lewis Nash, and two attractively languorous vocal appearances from Anita Baker, this is an unequivocally enjoyable album.

JAZZ ALBUMS

PAUL ROGERS QUARTET

Time of Brightness

(Rare Music RM027)

THE Paul Rogers Quartet, in addition to its bass-playing leader/composer, comprises saxophonist Paul Dummell, drummer Tony Levin and pianist Sophia Domanchik. The three men are members of the superb improvising quartet, Mujica, and the freer passages in Rogers's impassioned music share much of that band's interactive intensity.

Rogers and Dummell, however, are also regular partners in a duo playing folk music, and the themes sparking off the album's two suites contain enough of that form's bright fluency to provide a balance to the energy of the band's free improvisation. Domanchik brings telling dynamic and textural variety to the quartet's music, making the album a serious rival to recent issues from UK sextet Dreamtime and American saxophonist David S. Ware as improvised jazz recording of 1998.

CHRIS PARKER

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- (1) *Ladies & Gentlemen — The Best of* George Michael (Epic) 1,200,000
- (2) *Hit List* Phil Collins (Virgin) 900,000
- (3) *Where We Belong* Boyzone (Polydor) 800,000
- (4) *Where We Belong* Boyzone (Polydor) 800,000
- (5) *Where We Belong* Boyzone (Polydor) 800,000
- (6) *Where We Belong* Boyzone (Polydor) 800,000
- (7) *Where We Belong* Boyzone (Polydor) 800,000
- (8) *Where We Belong* Boyzone (Polydor) 800,000
- (9) *Where We Belong* Boyzone (Polydor) 800,000
- (10) *Where We Belong* Boyzone (Polydor) 800,000

Figure in brackets indicates last week's position

WEST END SHOWS

Jenny Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
Phone venue for ticket availability.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA: The D'Oyly Carte Company comes to the West End bringing Gilbert and Sullivan's joyful adventures with pirates, policemen and a modern major-general.
Queens (0171-494 5041).

QUATRE MAINS: Astonishing dance for hands created by Andrew Dawson, creator of *Thunderbirds* and *Joe and the Juice*, director for *The Right Size*.
Lyric Studio, W8 (0181-741 2311).

CHICAGO: Maria Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival of Kander and Ebb's musical about murder and hokum.
Adelphi (0171-344 0059).

THE GOLDEN AGE: David Bart and Glynis Brown star in Sylvia Friedman and Cathy Shostak's uplifting new musical about the man-made monster who runs amok.
New End, NW3 (0171-794 0022).

JESUS MY BOY: Tom Conti in John Doolittle's hilariously funny comedy about the father of the nation.
Apollo, W1 (0171-494 5070).

PETER PAN: Justin Slinger in the title role, with David Troughton as Captain Hook. In the return of Fiona Land's enjoyable production.
Olivier, SE1 (0171-492 3000).

THE SHOWMAN: The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters star over the audience in Bill Alexander's joyful production.
Paseo, WC2 (0171-863 8222).

THE KING AND I: A whistle-a-heap tune with Phil Wilton's Steam Factory production of the feelgood Rodgers and Hammerstein musical.
SAC (0171-423 2222).

LATE NITE CATECHISM: Margot Doreen plays the role of Sister in her American comedy hit, co-written with Vicki Quade, covering the audience with old-time Catholicism.
Jermyn Street (0171-257 2575).

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA: Tom Goodman-Hill and Dominic Rowan play the estranged twins in Edward Hall's pleasing RSC production first seen at Stratford.
PA (0171-638 8911).

ARABIAN NIGHTS: Al Bano, Sinbad and lesser-known tales adapted and directed by Dominic Cooke for the Christmas show.
Young Vic (0171-828 8383).

CONDORILLA: Neil Bartlett and the Shostakovich Peter team stage a seriously wonderful version of Angela Carter's parable. Magic provided by Paul Kane.
Lyric (0181-741 8701/2811).

THE BEST OF TIMES: The Edward Theatre's programme of Jerry Herman songs from *La Cage aux Folles*, *Mame*, *Mozart & Me* and *Hello, Dolly!* transfers to the West End. Cast includes Kathryn Evans.
Theatre Royal, W8 (0171-836 8877).

LITTLE MALCOLM AND HIS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE EUNUCHS: Denis Lawson directs Ewan McGregor in David Hare's celebrated student period play.
Haymarket (0171-722 9001).

INTO THE WOODS: Sondheim's nightmarish take on favourite fairytales. John Crowley directs the whole musical.
Dorset (0171-369 1732).

THE INVENTION OF LOVE: John Wood plays the aged A.E. Housman in the play about the poet's life. West End transfer for Richard Eyre's production.
Theatre Royal, Haymarket (0171-836 8800).

AMADEUS: David Suchet plays Salieri with Michael Sheen as Mozart in Peter Hall's strongly cast production of the Shaffer play.
Old Vic (0171-428 7818).

WEST SIDE STORY: An Johnson's stylish revival of Leonard Bernstein's classic is a triumph of clarity and imagination over the limited Manhattan setting between the Jets and the Sharks.
Princess Edward (0171-447 5400).

ANNE: A musical by Strouse/Charnin to tug at your heartstrings while playing loose with the facts. Anne is the dastardly orphanage waitress. With Kevin Colson and Christine Ebersole as her love and her mother.
Victoria Palace (0171-334 1317).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

Geoff Brown's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

THE ACID HOUSE (18): Three darkly comic tales of drugs, drink and hallucination by Irvine Welsh. An indelible one-liner. With Stephen McKelvie, Ewan Bremner, and Kevin McKidd. Director, Paul McGuigan.

SITCOM (18): A French bourgeois family indulges itself in diverting London, occasionally acted as a director. Director, Francois Ozon.

STAR TREK: SURVIVOR (PG): Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew come to the rescue of a peaceful race who have found the star of youth. Lightly likeable. With Donna Murphy, F. Murray Abraham. Director, Jonathan Frakes.

THE NIGHTY (PG): Endearing tale of two outcast children, one hunking, the other crippled, who pool their resources. Peter Chistom directs. Sharon Stone, Kevin Costner and Ewan McGregor.

WHAT DREAMS MAY COME (18): Robert Williams weaves through the thriller trying to find his loved ones. Technically dazzling, but sabotaged by a weak script. With Annette Bening, Cuba Gooding Jr and Max Von Sydow. Director, Vincent Ward.

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (18): Splendid animation, but there's not much for toddlers in the biblical story of Moses leading the Israelites to the promised land. Voice talents include Val Kilmer and Ralph Fiennes. The directors are Brenda Chapman, Steve Hickner and Simon Wells.

BABE PIG IN THE CITY (18): Everyone's favourite talking pig backs the fortunes of the hostile city. Geographical, misguided sequel to the hit film. With Maggie Smith. Director, George Miller.

DANCING AT LUGHNASSA (PG)

Compressed and perfunctory version of Brian Friel's play about five spinster women who dance. With Michael Sheen, Catherine McCormack and Kathy Burke. Director, Pat O'Connor.

RUSH HOUR (18): LA and Hong Kong cops join forces on a kidnapping case. Routine fare, enhanced by Asian legends Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker. Director, Brett Ratner.

TWILIGHT (15): Down-at-heel private investigator (Paul Newman) is lured into a murder mystery. Inconsequential plot, but a wonderful cast. With Gene Hackman, Susan Sarandon, James Garner. Director, Robert Benton.

THE NEGOTIATOR (18): Police hostage negotiator takes hostages himself to prove his innocence. Overblown suspense thriller, with Samuel L. Jackson and Kevin Spacey. Director, F. Gary Gray.

OUT OF SIGHT (15): Escaped convict George Clooney finds himself falling for the inmate's mental health officer. On his trail. Dazzling, inventive work. Steven Soderbergh.

BLADE (18): Escapingly, jumped horror fantasy. Not for kids. With Wesley Snipes as the vampire-hunting action hero from the pages of Marvel Comics. Directed by Stephen Norrington.

MY NAME IS JOE (18): Reformed Glasgow alcoholic begins an affair with a young woman. With Peter Mullan and Louise Goodall.

THE TRUMAN SHOW (PG): Jim Carrey discovers that his whole life has been caught on camera for TV. Metaphorical and intelligent satire, directed by Peter Weir. With Laura Linney and Noah Emmerich.

ELIZABETH (15): Cate Blanchett is magnificent as the young Queen in the first of two films. With Geoffrey Rush, Joseph Fiennes and Christopher Eccleston. Director, Shoolie Kuper.

CDs reviewed in The Times can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

OPERA & BALLET

COLOURED OF JUSTICE
English National Ballet
Derek Deane
The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
Sat Jan 2, 7.30pm
Ticket Office 0171 344 0000
Box Office 0171 344 0000

THE TRUCKER
Derek Deane
The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
Sat Jan 2, 7.30pm
Ticket Office 0171 344 0000
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THE TRUCKER
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THE TRUCKER
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The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
Sat Jan 2, 7.30pm
Ticket Office 0171 344 0000
Box Office 0171 344 0000

THEATRES

THE COLOUR OF JUSTICE
The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry
Edited by Richard Norton-Taylor
Wed 6 Jan, 7.30pm
Box Office 0171 344 0000

THEATRES

ALHAMBRA AT THE ALHAMBRA
0171 344 4444
The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
Sat Jan 2, 7.30pm
Ticket Office 0171 344 0000
Box Office 0171 344 0000

MR PONTA & HIS MATTI
0171 344 4444
The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
Sat Jan 2, 7.30pm
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CONCERT 0171 344 1341
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The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
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The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
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LONDON APOLLO
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NEW LONDON
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ROYAL COURT 0171 344 1341
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The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
Sat Jan 2, 7.30pm
Ticket Office 0171 344 0000
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media times

The seeds of self-destruction

Peter Mandelson's early combative press handling became, sadly, habit-forming, says Christine Buckley

When Stephen Byers, the new Trade and Industry Secretary, walks through the ever-revolving door at the DTI next week his first aim must be to last longer than the 150 days of his predecessor.

He will have no shortage of advice about the best way forward. But he could do worse than start with his own public and press relations — a role which, bizarrely, Peter Mandelson never got to grips with in his time in government.

Robert Harris, the author, described the press coverage of his friend's loan scandal as the worst since Hitler. He was exaggerating, but he had a point. Some of Mandelson's special treatment was secured by sheer irony — that Labour's king of spin was tarnished by the same sleaze that he so effectively campaigned against. But there was a second irony — that the great communicator had a fundamental inability to communicate on his own behalf. In as much as the screaming headlines before Christmas helped to shape Mandelson's decision that he should resign, he was hoist by his own petard.

Mandelson's relations with the media were forged when he had a fight on his hands. As director of communications for Labour during the Kinnock years he had to attempt to present a unified front when the party was losing its direction and the press was hostile.

Part of his approach was to bully lobby correspondents, picking off individuals at press conferences and favouring less questioning reporters. There is scarcely a political reporter from the time that does not have a Mandelson shouting-match story. From then on he

broadened his attacks across national press correspondents until he became a master of news manipulation through Labour's rebuttal unit, which, arguably, shaped much of the political news agenda in the run-up to the last general election. Increasingly, he became more of a hate figure. But, by the last election, he should have known better and should have ensured that others fired the public relations bullets.

By then he was an MP for five years and, more importantly, Tony Blair's most trusted and valuable political ally. Two years ago Mandelson was the man most likely to achieve the heights of government. He would have been advised to have put a distance between himself and spin-doctoring, concerning himself more publicly with policy-making.

But he couldn't resist being seen to wield the truncheon. While publicly bemoaning his own lack of good PR, many think he savoured his unpopularity because it could be interpreted as fear, therefore enhancing his power. It was a silly and elemental mistake. But Mandelson seems to have benefited from little, if any, sensible advice.

So his hubris continued into Government when, as Minister without Portfolio, he became the Government's key spin-doctor. Then came Mandelson's promotion to the Cabinet as Trade and Industry Secretary. Here was a proper job which he could embrace with vigour and with which he could raise the profile of the DTI to heights not seen since the Heseltine reign. And he did. Mandelson's short tenure was a rare blast of energy and enthusiasm through a department that had become both a backwater and a political graveyard.

He just couldn't resist wielding the truncheon



Home truth: while publicly bemoaning his own lack of good PR, many believe that Peter Mandelson savoured his fearsome reputation

Yet his penchant for projecting a poor image rolled on despite pledging to the TUC in his first major speech "no more spin, honest". Mandelson had a particular unpopularity at the DTI — industrial journalists. His dislike of them, part of whose role is to cover trade unions, was well and previously documented. He thought that they were too ready to put over the unions' case and uncontrollable in that they do not necessarily need to be friendly to politicians to get stories. It had been hoped that Mandelson would adopt a more mature attitude in Government. He didn't. For the recent Competitiveness

White Paper, he excluded me from a briefing and told the BBC that he didn't want Steve Evans, its industry correspondent, to cover the story. Both Evans and I covered the publication of the White Paper, which, ironically, was largely well-received and favourably reported. The BBC told Mandelson that Evans would do all radio coverage as well as television, thus freeing out the Secretary of State from half the airwaves if he did not co-operate. He did, but went on to tell other journalists he wanted his ministerial actions covered by business journalists and that industrial correspondents were "far too redolent of

trade unions and old Labour". Mandelson turned down requests for interviews, did not take questions at the Confederation of British Industry conference and excluded many reporters who covered his areas of responsibility. Representatives of *Vogue* had more success in getting access when they featured his now famous home. He was silly on two counts. Industrial correspondents report on many business-related issues, not just labour relations. They cover almost the entire brief of the DTI. In fact, secondly, to dismiss out of hand correspondents who talk to trade unions, who represent

the interests of seven million people, and whose activities come under the DTI's auspices was — for an Industry Secretary — ludicrous. It is likely that nothing could have saved Mandelson from an untimely exit from Government once news leaked of Geoffrey Robinson's loan. But the man without whom new Labour would not have been elected may have secured a more dignified departure if he had been more aware of his public image and a little less ready to rely on bullying as a communications tool.

● The author is industrial correspondent of The Times

CableTV packages may ice scrutiny

THE Independent Television Commission is pushing ahead with an investigation into whether it is fair for cable companies to "bust" together a package including a telephone line and Thames, writes Ray Snoddy

The package, offered to subscribers for cost of renting a phone line, has been successful in driving up the number of cable subscribers.

Last year the ITC changed the nature of how it channels TV is sold in the UK, when it dismantled the existing system of charging large packages of basic channels before viewers could get access to premium services.

As a result, cable subscribers have typically been offered the low-price initial package, including a telephone line, but were then able to choose from a range of smaller premium packages.

Now the ITC is likely to produce a consultative document which will seek to create a more level playing field for competitors in the market.

Unlike cable companies, neither satellite nor terrestrial TV operators have the capability of offering a telephone service that competes with BT. One option for the ITC would be to ask that consumers should have to take the telephone and TV package. It could also ask that the option of buying either part of the package at a fair price should be available.

At last year's European Cable Convention in London, Elizabeth Murdoch, managing director of Sky, warned that cable companies became successful they would exert regulation. News International, owner of *The Times* and a 10 per cent stake in BSkyB.



From eloquent forays into the mind of John Lennon to hammy rodents, noodle fights and cringe-inducing stereotypes of Euro-glamour, the television advertisements of 1998 produced a potpourri of style, humour and pure farce

Commercial breaks: winners and losers

BEST OF 1998

1. VW POLO: SELF-DEFENCE

The best of the brilliant VW advertising is set in a tai-chi class, where it slowly becomes apparent that the participants are miming the actions of getting into a car, right down to adjusting the rear-view mirror. My favourite.

2. NIKE: AIRPORT

This is the best of the World Cup advertising by a long mile. The Brazilian team going through its paces in front of a captivated airport terminal audience and a mildly impressed Eric Cantona was so entrancing that it allowed us to forget about the commercialisation of football before the World Cup.

3. VW PASSAT: RULER

"Is that a ruler in your pocket or are you just pleased to see me?" The inevitable punline in the latest of the "obsession" series for the Passat is that the VW engineer produces a ruler, much to Fraulin Barfly's disappointment.

4. AUDI A8: GOLF CLUB

The ad that finally exposed the petty world of golf clubs and the sad people who frequent them. Clubs are apparently banning Audis from their car



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IN THE year that Allan Leighton, the chief executive of Asda, committed advertising heresy by declaring "I am a fan of wallpaper advertising", the issue of advertising effectiveness — and how to prove it — hung heavy over the industry.

Wallpaper advertising is creative work that is so bland and inoffensive as to be able to pass unnoticed night after night on your television set, or not interrupt you as you turn the pages of your favourite publication.

It can still work, through the drip-drip repetition of a huge advertising spend forcing its way into the consumer's subconscious. Historically, the leading exponent of this technique is Procter & Gamble, with its ad campaigns for the likes of Ariel, Daz, Bold and Fairy.

Other exponents include big retailers such as Asda and MFI, and the Dixons/Currys group. It is the type of advertising that never wins awards, and

7. BATCHELOR'S SUPERNOODLES: LADS

Advertising for the *Men Behaving Badly* generation. The mates larking about in the kitchen, throwing noodles at each other in martial-arts-movie style commits advertising heresy through its lack of respect for the product — and it's so much the better for it.

8. SCALEXTRIC: BOYS

Along with Ikea, the most politically incorrect advertising in years. I love the one where the new father cradles someone else's baby because it's a boy.

9. SONY STAMINA: CRASH

A woman leaves her man outside a classic desert diner. As

he struggles to get his cam-

corder to work, a car roars up, suddenly flips over and crashes into the roof of the diner amid a huge explosion. She returns from the washroom, perplexed. He looks sheepish. It is one of the best-directed spots of the year.

10. McDONALD'S: EUROSTAR SPOOF

Alan Shearer sits on the train taking the mickey out of Eric Cantona's performance in an earlier Eurostar ad. Shearer philosophises about gibberish, and wonders about the McDonald's of the Scottish fan sitting behind him. The best of some excellent McDonald's World Cup promotions.

which no one can remember even if pushed, but — to the horror of the luvvies elements in the industry — it appears to shift product. The argument about what is and what is not effective advertising has never raged more fiercely because clients are no longer prepared to accept Lord Leverhulme's adage that half their advertising budget will be wasted, but nobody knows which half.

The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising's Effectiveness Awards exist to carry the ad industry's message to the client community, but its last two grand prize winners have proved controversial: BT, because critics suggested its success was down to its vast budget; and, this year, the Health Education Authority's anti-drugs advertising, because many thought the proof offered was questionable.

But behind this quest for effectiveness is the issue of trust. Or the lack of it. Rightly or wrongly, the advertising industry has not regained the trust of

much of the marketing community lost during the last recession.

Too many clients believed that too many agencies were making too much money out of them, without being able to prove whether the money was well spent.

In a gloomier 1999, harassed marketing directors, with finance directors breathing down their necks, will be seeking supporting proof as never before. It's one reason that an over-reliance on pre-air consumer research has led to more and more campaigns that are safe but uninspiring.

As a result, the biggest challenge for the UK ad industry in 1999 is to convince its clients to value its strategic and creative intuition, the very skills for which ad agencies are hired in the first place. It will be able to do so only if it can restore lost trust. Talking the need to demonstrate effectiveness more seriously would be a start.

WORST OF 1998

1. LEVITS: KEVIN THE HAMSTER

The great "boy meets girl" campaign came to an end last year, only to be replaced with an appalling set of commercials that ruined years of good work building the brand. Forget whether Kevin really died or not, it might have been an interesting ad — for Diesel!

2. FORD KA: FOOTBALL BOOTS

The shape and design of the funky Ford Ka were compared to a pair of football boots (well, it was pre-World Cup) by a best-tubbed hunk grinning insanely. Everything about it was

misguided, from the terrible casting to the pretentious directing.

3. KERRYGOLD: JACK CHARLTON

To be precise, this was advertising Kerrygold's Dubliner Irish Cheese, so who better to endorse it than that celebrated honorary Irishman, Jack Charlton? Cue every soft-focus Irish cliché in the book.

4. CITROËN XSARA: CLAUDIA SCHIFFER

What do you do if you have Claudia Schiffer under contract to advertise your unremarkable car with its unpronounceable name? Ask her to walk down a sweeping staircase, remove her clothing and

climb into the Xsara, naked. Only she isn't naked and you don't even get the very best computer-generated image of her as if she were naked. Lazy thinking, sloppy commercial.

5. AMARETTO DI SARONNO: PARTY

When will they learn? Lowest-common-denominator pan-European advertising: throw in a few glamorous Eurotrash types, have them bray hysterically at each other's jokes, and mix in product (alcohol) shots over plinky-plonk soundtrack.

6. FERRERO ROCHER: FAMILY PARTY

The ambassador has clearly hit impoverished times. Instead, assorted escapees from

a local asylum celebrate a porticoed house by build a Ferrero tree and smiling helpily. So soft-focus it could be a porn movie.

7. NORWICH UNION: RED BRACES

It's supposed to be about people celebrating affluence and security. How many people gaudy gowns have ever met that sport red bras?

8. PERSIL: TABLETS

I don't even know where to begin. One again "real" corners are fined endorsing the product, but could have been better. Yet the product is a sile idea that deserves success.

9. JOHN SMITH'S: ORDINARY BLOKE

The advertiser has disrespected with its celebrity endorsement (Jack De) replacing him with a cardboard cut-out of an ordinary bloke, because John Smith's is so good it does need a deity. It does.

10. AMERICA: ONLINE

The women, nauseatingly faring wailing about the internet while loads of computer scroll down the mobile clothes happily to put me using the jet.

● Stefano Farfoglio is the Editor of Campaign

مركز الأبحاث

Cable TV packages may face scrutiny

Who needs sex? It's something for nothing that sells

Promotions and Diana were the circulation winners of 1998

Ask journalists who have worked on the national tabloids for years what sells newspapers — Editors such as Neil Wallis at the *Sunday People* or Colin Myler at the *Sunday Mirror* — and they will answer in three words: sex and football. "It's an unbeatable combination," Wallis says.

Winter week by winter week, that may be true, but what moved newspapers fastest off the newsagents' shelves in 1998, according to *Paper Round's* annual survey of the year's bestselling stories and promotions, were promises of money, something for nothing or special supplements or Diana, Princess of Wales — at least until the anniversary of her death in September, when the nation at last decided to let her rest in peace.

Two papers top the 1998 best-seller list. The biggest boost in volume of sales was won by the *Daily Mail* when it launched its 12-week Saturday Diana putwork in January and achieved an increase of 415,000 on the previous week. By March 1, after offering a Diana video, a Diana rose and a free poster, Saturday sales had risen to 3,386,110, the highest in the paper's history.

The biggest percentage increase — 18 per cent — was achieved by *The Mirror* when it serialised in March the story of Trevor Rees-Jones, the bodyguard who was injured in the Paris crash. Sales lifted by 387,000 on the first day and an extra 1.4 million copies were sold during the week.

The *News of the World* and *The Sun* also did well from Diana, as did *The Mail on Sunday* when it serialised Penny Junor's biography of the

Prince of Wales, and achieved the second-highest sale recorded so far, an increase over the previous week of 219,000 copies, lifting it to 2,567,500.

Christmas television listings were winners for *The Sun* (up 353,000) and the *Sunday People* (up 176,000); the winner for *The Sunday Times* was its annual Rich List. *The Sun*, on the day after England lost to Argentina in the World Cup, and the *Sunday Mirror* with an *Only Fools and Horses* video and World Cup coins did well from football: yet again *The Sun* and *The Mirror* and *Sunday Mirror* with Moneybags, achieving sales lifts of more than 250,000. *The Daily Mail* joined in in September with Lucky Wallis. This promotion was genuinely different: every reader could win a prize. Sales rose by an average of

126,300 copies a day, and by almost 250,000 for *The Mail on Sunday*. Soon after *The Sun* and *News of the World* joined in with Every One's A Winner.

The most successful marketing strategy of the past five years, a cut in cover price, has doubled the sale of *The Times*, and *The Daily Telegraph* has enlisted 271,500 pre-paid subscribers at less than the cover price. Five years on, however, cutting cover prices has diminishing power and works most successfully as a one-off tactic.

The single biggest sales increase of the year was won by *The Mirror* when it cut its price on September 26 from 32p to 10p. It put on 475,000, an increase of nearly 17 per cent. *The Times* boosted sales by 261,000 (33 per cent) on Saturday, January 10, when it introduced its new magazine and reduced the cover price to 20p. Its second and third highest increases were for a *Titanic* supplement (up 91,000 on a Saturday) and a reprint of 1912 *Titanic* reports (up 105,000 on a Monday).

The top 20 is dominated by three newspaper groups: Associated Newspapers, publishers of the *Daily Mail* and *The Mail on Sunday*, News International, owners of *The Sun*,

day gained 126,000 in January in promoting sport, and World Cup magazines added 64,000 for *The Express on Sunday* and 38,000 for the *Daily Star* (7 per cent). A Panini World Cup stickers promotion gave *The Observer* its best Sunday.

The Budget delivered the highest increases of the year for *The Guardian* (up 60,000) and *The Daily Telegraph* (up 21,000). *The Sunday Telegraph*, paradoxically, had its best sale on January 4 when it raised its cover price. *The Independent* prefers not to disclose its successes, but it is a safe guess that it has its best days in August when it lists university vacancies.

The top 20 demonstrates the crucial role of marketers in maintaining and boosting newspaper sales. *The Sunday Times* hit its highest sale for years on October 4 when it offered a BSkyB digital magazine, a wine guide and Woodrow Wyatt's diaries. *The Times* added 397,000 in sales in one week of September when it promoted an easylet offer and Richard Branson's autobiography. Divide that by six and average sales for the week are up by 66,000. Divide it by 24 and average monthly

MOST SUCCESSFUL PROMOTIONS OF 1998

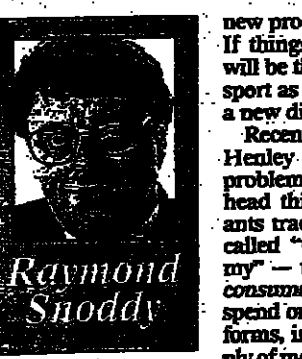
Promotion	Start	End	Days	Extra Copies Sold
Diana putwork	Jan 12	Mar 1	24/1	415,000
Trevor Rees-Jones	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/3	387,000
Christmas TV	Dec 24	Dec 24	24/1	353,000
Diana supplement	Mar 1	Mar 1	18/1	307,000
Moneybags	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/2	298,000
Moneybags	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/2	276,000
New magazine/20p	Jan 10	Jan 10	24/1	261,000
Moneybags	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/2	257,000
Moneybags	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/2	250,000
Lucky Wallis	Sep 26	Sep 26	6/3	249,000
Penny Junor on Prince Charles	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/3	245,000
Rich List	Dec 24	Dec 24	24/1	222,000
England lose to Argentina	Jun 17	Jun 17	6/2	221,000
Grand National	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/4	208,000
Every One's A Winner	Mar 1	Mar 1	25/10	194,000
Ryanair cheap flights	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/3	189,000
Ryanair cheap flights	Mar 1	Mar 1	2/3	188,000
Diana supplement	Mar 1	Mar 1	21/8	183,000
Christmas TV	Dec 24	Dec 24	6/2	176,000
World Cup/Only Fools and Horses video	Dec 24	Dec 24	24/4	168,000

Drama ahead as media supply outstrips demand

With all the fuss over the millennium, you might be mistaken in thinking that 1999 will be a transitional year, a pointer to more exciting times. Not so for the media, with the year likely to produce a higher than average amount of drama and crises. Reality will shed light on some of the more ambitious flights of technological fancy. The biggest reality test will be that applied to digital television — both satellite and terrestrial — launched just a few months ago with parties and fireworks. Right now, it is a phoney war. Equipment is in short supply and both Sky Digital and ONdigital can justly boast of "fantastic" interest and black boxes that are walking off the shelves. But once the "early adopters" and techno-freaks have had their appetite for 100 channels of TV satisfied, we will start to learn just how deep is the desire for extra choice, much of it in the form of marginal channels. If the public turns out to be stubborn, unimpressed or wary, watch for the first managerial sacrifices before the summer holidays end.

This will also be the year in which we find out if Lord Holford can do more than stabilise *The Express* — holding the circulation decline to manageable levels. Or can the patient rise from its sickbed?

As the life-and-death struggle continues, media watchers — in London, at least — will be diverted by the launch of two "free" daily newspapers. News International, owner of *The Times*, will aim a new title at what it hopes is the soft underbelly of the *Evening Standard's* near monopoly of classified advertising in the capital. Associated Newspapers, which owns the *Evening Standard*, will try to protect its other flank by launching a free morning edition. Delicious shades of an old-fashioned press war provides proof that the Internet is not entirely dominating



Raymond Snoddy

new product areas — not yet. If things start to flag, there will be the diversion of blood sport as the BBC tries to find a new director-general.

Recent research by the Henley Centre pointed to a problem that could come to a head this year. The consultants tracked what they have called "the attention economy" — the time and money consumers are prepared to spend on the media, in all its forms, in relation to the supply of media products. The researchers discovered "a Niagara of supply" measured against only "a pint-glass of demand".

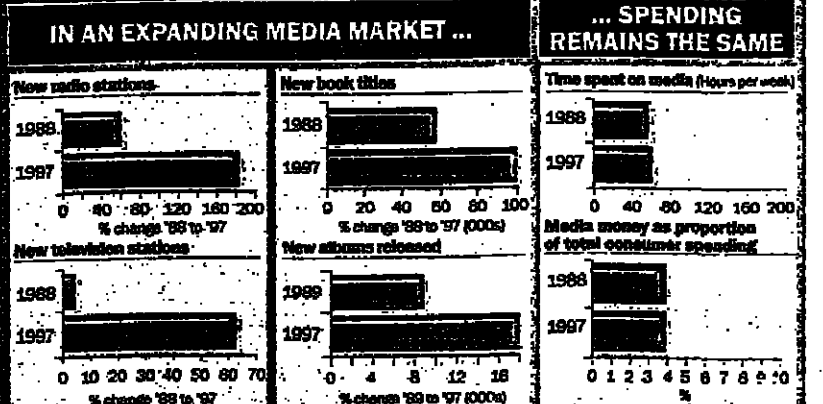
The trend is well-known but figures for the past decade are startling nonetheless. Between 1989 and 1997, there was a 1,525 per cent rise in the number of television stations and a 213 per cent growth in radio stations. The number of book titles was up by 77 per cent and new albums up 114 per cent; new magazine titles were up only 19 per cent.

Remarkably, the Henley Centre found that over the past decade the amount of time an individual spent interacting with the media hardly budged at all from 60 hours a week — or, in terms of money, from 4 per cent of consumer spending.

Despite all the new channels and media offerings, the forecast for 1999 is for an increase in time spent with the media of only six minutes a person a week and £8 extra spending a year. This amounts to little more than two visits to the cinema or eight Sunday newspapers. Such benchmark figures must induce an instant reality factor, not to mention sobriety.

It gets worse for some sections of the media in this battle for consumers' time and money. The Henley Centre estimates that in 1999 the consumer will devote six minutes less a week to reading compared with last year and 24 minutes less to viewing. But it predicts that a consumer will spend 18 minutes more listening, and 18 more with interactive media. The money breakdown is: £7 a year more spent on viewing; £2 more on interacting; £1 less on listening; no change for reading.

The news is worst of all for newspapers. It is the only medium in which the researchers predict loss of both consumer time and money this year. As the consultants warn us: it's a fight for survival. There is no danger that 1999 will be a boring year for the media.



Special supplements on Diana, Princess of Wales, and promises of money or prizes were the two subjects which moved newspapers fastest off the newsagents' shelves last year

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مركز من الاصل

Shares close off their lows

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High Low Company Price % CHG

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

BANKS			
Barclays	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Barclays	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Barclays	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Barclays	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Barclays	10.00	9.95	-0.05

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

BUILDING MATERIALS			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

CHEMICALS			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

CONSTRUCTION			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

DISTRIBUTORS			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

ENGINEERING VEHICLES			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

ENGINEERING			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
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Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

ELECTRONIC & ELECT			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

ELECTRICITY			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
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FOOD MANUFACTURERS			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
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HEALTHCARE			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
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HOUSEHOLD GOODS & TEXT			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
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INSURANCE			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

INVESTMENT TRUSTS			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

LEISURE & HOTELS			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

MID-CAP			
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
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MID-CAP			
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Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05
Adnoca	10.00	9.95	-0.05

450	JPJ	83%	2.4	10.8	255	21% Alcatel	32.9	11.2	52
178	73% Electronics	83%	...	...	327	12% Alcatel	135	22	102
313	10% Ellis & Connors	215	5.2	8.8	385	20% Alcatel	282	+ 1	54
78	53% Euro Colour	59	6.4	9.7	170	102% Alcatel & Luce	108	8.5	52
94	35% Halcrow	40	3.4	6.9	125	23% Avonnet Indust.	37	6.7	35
3,189	30% Halcrow	2475	- 12%	2.2	...	...	...	...	...
1244	41% ICA	521	+ 1	6.1	20.7	335	25% ICA	374	- 1%
		521		6.0	24.6	230	91% ICA	124	- 1

Western business under threat from Islamic backlash

BY CARL MORTISHED
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

AN Islamic backlash against the recent US and British attacks on Iraq will pose a threat to Western businesses in 1999, raising the prospect of further terrorist attacks in Egypt and growing unrest in Turkey.

A report by Merchant International Group (MIG), a consultancy which specialises in political, economic and security

risks, predicts that the bombing of Iraq will escalate the growth of Islamic terrorism. MIG sees the recent deaths in the Yemen as evidence of the beginnings of a campaign aimed at Westerners doing business or travelling in the region. MIG claimed yesterday that a representative of Osama bin Laden, the Saudi Arabian accused of funding terrorist attacks from Afghanistan, was recently sent to Syria to consult with members of Hamas. According to MIG, the purpose

of the meeting was to plan attacks on British and American citizens.

The organisation also predicts further terrorist activity from the Algerian GIA and the Egyptian group Al-Qama al-Islamiyya. In Egypt, efforts by the Government to reduce the Islamic content of the educational system and to reduce the influence of religious scholars will also cause friction.

More alarming is MIG's prediction of an increase in religious tension in Tur-

key. Stuart Poole-Robb, chief executive of MIG, explained that the Turkish Government had been taking measures to curb the spread of Islamic culture and teaching. He said: "Things are going to get out of hand. I don't think it will be as aggressive as Egypt but I do think there will be protests. There is a fear that there could be a Taliban-inspired Islamic extremist backlash."

Turkey's recent overtures to Israel are expected to fuel the protests and increase

tension with Syria. The latter will find itself sandwiched between Turkey and Israel, two pro-Western states, and Syria has been supporting Kurdish separatists in Turkey.

MIG monitors the activities of some 42 terrorist groups as well as 5,000 criminal organisations and advises companies on how to avoid such risks.

In contrast, MIG now believes Iran is becoming a safer place to do business and predicts that Italy, France and the UK

will upgrade their diplomatic relations with the country. Mr Poole-Robb said: "In 1999 we will see significant changes. With Rafsanjani and Khatami working in tandem, they are doing all they can to attract foreign direct investment."

Elsewhere, MIG points to the potential of armed conflict between Morocco and Algeria over disputed southern territory, with the former country purchasing weaponry from both Russia and South Africa.

Boeing lifts deliveries to beat projections

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN SEATTLE

A TROUBLED year for Boeing ended on an upbeat note when the company announced the delivery of a record 530 aircraft for the year, meeting its 1998 goal and exceeding a recent projection that it would deliver 546 aircraft.

Boeing suffered a series of setbacks in 1998, forcing it to cut production and jobs in response to Asian economic problems and competition from Airbus Industrie, its only significant competitor.

But Alan Mulally, newly named president of the commercial airplane division, Boeing's largest group, said the company's success in meeting the production goal and its expectations of beating it in 1999 by delivering about 620 jetliners showed the "production system is starting to get healthy again."

Mr Mulally took the reins of the commercial airplane division from Ron Woodard in September as part of a sweeping reorganisation. Under Mr Woodard the division tried to nearly triple production over three years, but its plants, staffed with many newly hired workers, were overwhelmed by parts shortages, forcing Boeing to halt work on two assembly lines.

Since September Boeing has given warning of lower earnings in the coming year and announced plans to eliminate up to 38,000 jobs by the end of 1999 and an additional 10,000 jobs in 2000. Its workforce peaked at 238,000 in June 1998. Mr Mulally said the Asian economic crisis should have less of an impact on the group this year as fewer deliveries are scheduled to Asian airlines.

Small IFAs face fines after missing pensions deadline

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY

MORE than 100 small independent financial advisers (IFAs) have missed the important deadline to organise redress for clients in the first stage of the pensions mis-selling review, the Personal Investment Authority said last night.

Firms were obliged to submit details of compensation offered to people who were mis-sold personal pension plans in the 1980s and who are now retired or close to retirement by December 31.

The IFAs had to send in documents showing how they had calculated compensation and how many cases they had dealt with.

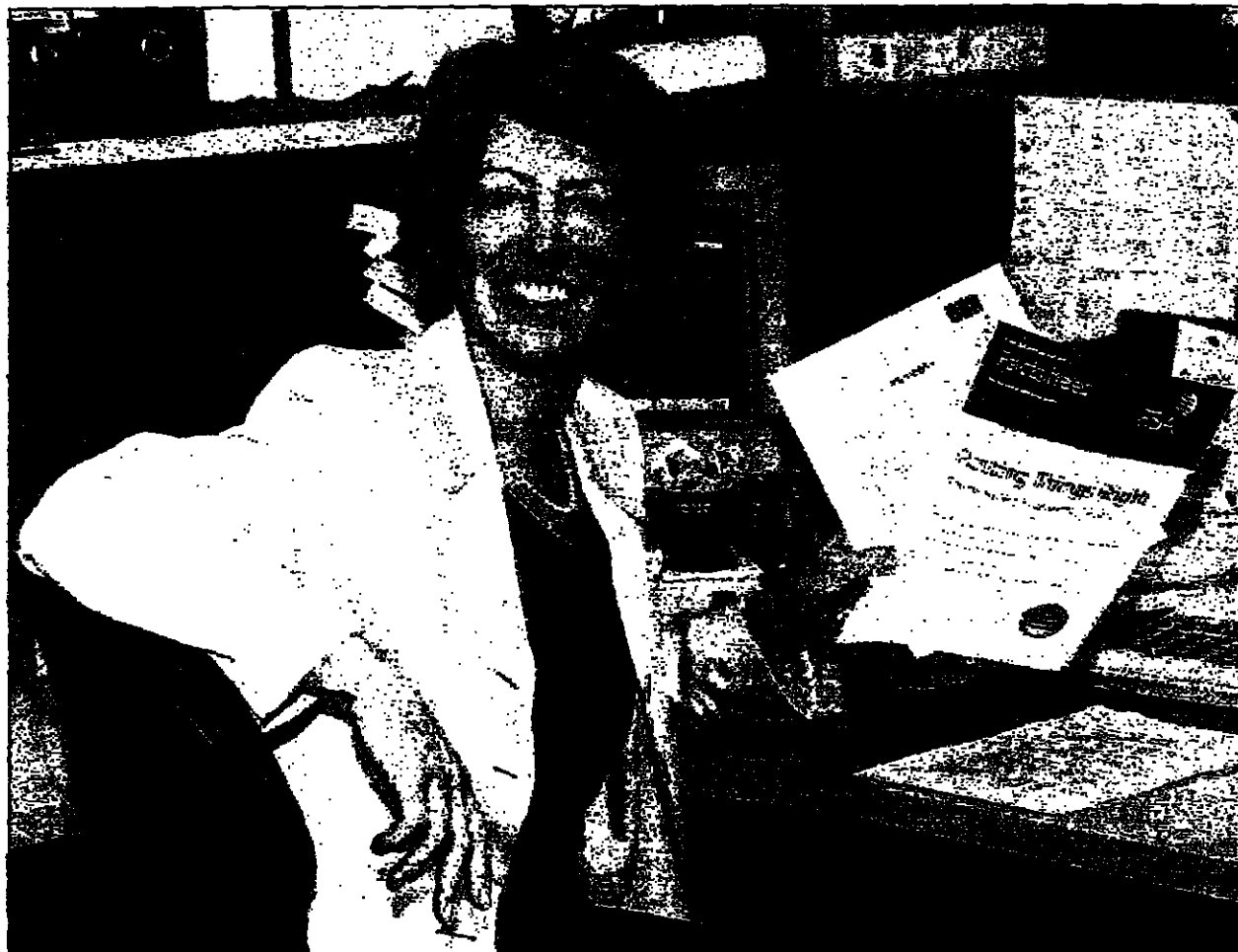
The PIA said yesterday that it had received a considerable number of forms in the past few days as IFAs rushed to send in their returns.

Many small firms brought in staff over the Christmas and New Year period in an attempt to meet the deadline, and all of the 41 biggest pension providers — among them many household names — have met the deadline already.

The PIA issued a stern warning earlier this week that it would not hesitate to issue fines to firms that missed the deadline, which was set in spring 1997.

A spokeswoman said: "We are receiving the final pieces of information and seeking figures and details of caseloads. By the end of next week we will have a clear picture of who has missed the deadline, and will then begin to examine whether or not they have a valid excuse."

Last month Patricia Hewitt, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, took a tough line against pension providers and



Patricia Hewitt has taken a tough line against pension providers and IFAs, and accused some of dragging their feet.

IFAs, some of which she accused of dragging their feet.

Last year more than 600 small IFA firms missed the initial deadline because of problems filling in forms or compiling data.

The PIA said that it had not ruled out "naming and shaming" and fining the principals of independent financial advisers

that consistently missed deadlines.

Some see the introduction of the proposed stakeholder pension — announced last month — as an indication that the Government has lost patience with high-charging insurance companies.

According to calculations by Lane Clark & Peacock, the con-

sulting actuary, however, the average value of the stakeholder pension could be just £50 a week.

David Lane, one of the firm's partners, said that the sum could be even less if the investment funds performed badly, or if investors could not afford to save more than £100 a month. An individual now

aged 30 paying £100 a month for the next 30 years could end up with the £50 a week pension, he said.

"Stakeholder pensions do not provide any guarantees. Individuals will be subject to the vagaries of the stock market, the effects of inflation and the prevailing price of annuities at retirement."

Microsoft launches attack on witness

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

MICROSOFT has launched a pre-emptive strike against the first government witness to be called when the historic antitrust trial resumes after the Christmas recess.

William Harris, the chief executive of Inuit, the leading personal finance software maker, is expected to give details of the arm-twisting he suffered at Microsoft's hands. His written testimony was prepared for release this week.

In a stinging personal attack on Mr Harris, Microsoft said: "Mr Harris's testimony is rife with rank speculation, hypothetical situations and attempts at complex legal, technical and economic analysis by a witness who is neither an attorney, a software developer, nor an economist."

The animosity between Microsoft and Mr Harris harks back to the software group's repeated attempts to take over Inuit. Mr Harris was able to fight off the attempts with the help of the Justice Department, which is now prosecuting the Microsoft case.

The takeover attempts were vetoed by the government regulators because Microsoft already offers a personal finance package called Money. The Inuit product, Quicken, is the market leader.

Mr Harris will follow the example of executives from AOL, Sun Microsystems, Netscape and Intel who have all testified against Microsoft. Another witness, Scott Cook, the

former Inuit chairman, even accused Bill Gates, the Microsoft chairman, of attempted bribery.

In 1996 Mr Gates sent an e-mail to Mr Cook, offering to do a favour "that would cost us something like \$1 [million] to do in return for switching browsers in the next few months."

Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser is directly competing with Netscape's Navigator.

The trial will resume on Monday, ending the recess that started on December 16. The trial has already lasted longer than lawyers had anticipated. The judge originally wanted to finish hearing testimonies before Christmas.



Gates pre-emptive strike

Russian GDP shrinks by 5.5%

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE Russian Government yesterday admitted that the country's economy had shrunk at its fastest rate since the end of the Soviet era.

Revealing the full extent of the damage wrought by the economic crisis which has engulfed the country, the Economics Ministry revealed statistics showing that Russian GDP contracted by 5.5 per cent in 1998.

Annual inflation has also soared to nearly 85 per cent, while trade, heavily dependent on oil exports, declined by 13.6 per cent. The Russian currency, the rouble, has lost nearly 70 per cent of its value since it became the target of speculators in late summer.

The depressing data was released as one of the country's largest banks moved one step closer to becoming the first substantial financial services company to go into liquidation since the crisis began.

Tokobank, once one of Russia's 20 largest finance houses, was ruled bankrupt by a Moscow court with \$363 million (£213 million) of debt against assets of just \$165 million.

Anagen property move another biotech blow

BY SAIED SHAH

THE crisis in the UK biotechnology sector deepened yesterday when Anagen gave up on micro-organisms research and launched an agreed bid for a property company, to be paid for in shares.

Gander Holdings, which has residential property in London's Kensington and Chelsea, agreed to the deal to take advantage of Anagen's tax losses, which stand at more than £27 million. Future profits can be offset against these tax losses to avoid paying tax.

Anagen has been a shell company since its automated immuno-assay technology

proved unsuccessful and it was delisted from the stock market in April 1997.

The offer is on the basis of one Anagen share for every Gander share, and 512 million new Anagen shares will be issued to Gander shareholders.

The enlarged group will be called Gander Properties and will include all the Gander board. The current members of the Anagen board, except William Cairns, chairman, and Kim Martin, will resign without compensation.

Gander, whose shares closed on Wednesday at 64p, has a market capitalisation of

about £35 million — a little more than half its net asset value of £66 million.

In August Gander bought Barrastford, a similar property company, for £24.4 million.

Gander said in its interim statement in October that it expects to make losses in the years ending January 1, 1999 and 2000.

In a joint statement, Gander and Anagen said that the prospects for Gander, as enlarged by the Barrastford acquisition, are encouraging and strong demand continues for the high-quality residential lettings in which it specialises.



Gander's Oliver Vaughan, chief executive, left, and Tom Vaughan, chairman, seek tax advantages

Customers can keep number when changing provider

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

MOBILE phone users can expect to be bombarded with advertising and special offers over the coming weeks as their service providers seek to retain their loyalty and to recruit subscribers from rival companies after the advent of mobile number portability.

Number portability will allow customers to switch from one network operator to another and take their existing mobile phone number with them. Orange said that it would be launching an advertising campaign to support mobile number portability. Bob Fuller, the group's chief operating officer, said:

"For the first time consumers will be offered real choice and will be able to vote with their feet if they are dissatisfied, unconvinced by the problems of having to change their number."

"We will be vigorously pursuing those customers who may be dissatisfied with their present network, making it both easy and simple to join Orange."

For customers who switch their existing number to One 2 One between today and the end of March, the company is offering up to £100 back on the second bill following transfer.

Both Vodafone and Cellnet are relying on their existing offers for the moment. David Edmonds, the Director-General

of Telecommunications, said that number portability "will encourage much more intense competition in the mobile market as the four companies fight to win and retain customers". The Ofcom chief added: "In the end the winner will be the customer."

The operators will be allowed to charge customers to cover the costs of transferring the numbers but this is not expected to be more than a one-off charge of £25.

A spokesman for Vodafone said that the company had been working for the past 12 months to ensure that the technology is ready for the increased volume of people switching services that the change will bring.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

RAPE OR ROMANCE?
She was his schoolteacher, he was only 12. Now they've got two children, and she's got seven years...
The Sunday Times Magazine this weekend

PLUS
Art trail: Charles Saatchi gives us a private view of his new 'neurotic realism' movement, the hottest new art in Britain today.
Glamour: bimbos are no longer required in the revamped Miss World, but the girls are still pushing for a sash.

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

هكذا من لا يصل

Boots to take on 100 staff

Boots The Chemist is taking on 100 staff to train as specialised consultants in preparation for the launch next month of three ranges of French skincare products. The advisers will offer skincare consultations in a specially designed area of 90 stores, next to the pharmacy.

The products include a range from Laboratoires Dermatologiques L'Oréal, a French business bought in 1996 by Boots Healthcare International, the non-prescription medicine division of the Boots group. All the brands aim to bridge the gap between medicinal and cosmetic products.

Korean bank sale

A US investment consortium took control of the ailing Korea First Bank (KFB) yesterday in the first significant foreign acquisition of a South Korean financial institution. The consortium, led by Newbridge Capital, which was selected ahead of HSBC Holdings, agreed to buy a 51 per cent stake in KFB for an undetermined price. Officials said the deal would help South Korea to introduce advanced banking skills into the industry, which has been marred by corruption and uncontrolled lending.

Ulster gold

Northern Ireland is set for a gold rush after Omagh Minerals won a licence to mine the precious metal in the province. The mine, near Omagh, will employ about 60 people when it opens later this year. The company expects to mine about 50,000 tonnes of ore a year.

AT&T wins approval for \$32bn TCI deal

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

The \$32 billion (£19 billion) takeover of TCI, the second-biggest US television cable operator, by AT&T, the leading phone company, has received the go-ahead from the Justice Department.

To win approval, the two companies agreed to divest TCI's 23 per cent stake in Sprint PCS, which offers mobile-phone services in direct competition to AT&T.

TCI will not have to sell its stake immediately but has to sign control over to a trustee who then has five years to sell the stake valued at more than \$2 billion.

The Justice Department approval clears the way for the creation of a new type of telecoms group which combines orthodox phone lines and sophisticated fibre-optic lines with a view to building a network that can deliver phone, television and computer services into homes.

Michael Armstrong, the AT&T chief executive, negotiated the TCI deal soon after his



Michael Armstrong, left, agreed the takeover with the TCI chairman, John Malone, in June

appointment last year. Wall Street views his vision of one integrated network as an ambitious bet that could either bankrupt AT&T or give it the monolithic position it enjoyed in the telephone sector before being broken up by the regulators in 1984.

AT&T's competitors had lobbied the Justice Department not to allow the resurrection of

an all-powerful AT&T. But the regulators took the view that competition was strong in the telecoms sector and that companies such as WorldCom and MCI are poised to follow Mr Armstrong's lead.

AT&T itself repeatedly pointed to the immense investments necessary to build the envisioned network. Analysts estimate that AT&T will have to

spend about \$5 billion on hardware alone.

After fleeing its muscles early in 1998 when merger mania was in full flow, the Justice Department has now returned to its more docile ways. Earlier this week it approved the BP-Amoco deal. The regulator's biggest casualty last year was the scuppered takeover of Northrup Grumman by Lockheed Martin.

ICI sale to Enron completed

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ENRON, the US power company, boosted its interests in the UK yesterday with the completion of a £300 million deal to buy ICI's Teesside utility interests.

The purchase, first announced in November, gives Enron an operation that supplies large industrial customers with gas, electricity and support services. The interests include a power station, water treatment plant, rail tracks and more than 1,760 acres of land. More than 550 staff will be transferred to Enron.

ICI's decision to sell the business — on which it estimates it will make a £120 million post-tax gain — is part of its overhaul of operations to shift away from industrial chemicals and industrial divisions to focus on speciality products, coatings and materials.

The company said it will use the sale proceeds to reduce debt, which stands at £4.4 billion.

Executives at E*Trade get \$100m present

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

EXECUTIVES at E*Trade, the second-biggest US online brokerage, have given themselves a Christmas present worth \$100 million (£60 million) after repricing their share options.

According to Securities & Exchange Commission documents, the company rewrote option schemes when Internet shares were at a low in October. Since then, the sector has staged a stunning return to new heights.

E*Trade's share price rose from a low of \$17, when the options were repriced, to \$60, swept along by Wall Street's keen interest in any company associated with the Internet.

Of E*Trade's 700 employees about two thirds are said to have share options. How many benefited from the repricing is not known. Top executives, including Christos Constantinides, the president, received 550,000 options each last year.

The company reported to the SEC that a total of 3.5 million shares were affected by the repricing move. The paper gains generated in the process

are estimated at more than \$100 million.

In most option schemes the recipients have to wait for several years to benefit from the gains. But the E*Trade scheme, which is not unusual in the get-rich-quick Internet sector, vests at a rate of 25 per cent a year.

While such a system would be viewed as an assault on shareholder value in most other companies, the E*Trade shareholders are unlikely to complain very loudly.

They too have benefited from the near quadrupling of the share price and probably do not want to rock the cash-laden boat, analysts said.

In an attempt to show a degree of modesty, the company made it known that the repriced options would have their vesting periods reset so that nobody could cash out immediately.

To prevent a repricing at a temporary share price low, most traditional company remuneration committees have policies on when and how quickly option schemes can be adjusted.

Bank unions may merge

Plans for the first industry-wide trade union for banking and building society workers will be put to the vote this month. Three of the main banking unions — the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union, UNIFI and the NatWest Staff Association — will ask their 200,000 members to approve the deal, which has been forged after two years of discussions. If it is endorsed, the super-union will start in May.

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Answers from page 26

TYMPF
(b) A coin in base silver circulating in Poland and Prussia in the 17th century. It was known as "goldentympe", and was worth 30 groschen despite being stamped only 18. The name became synonymous with "debased coin".

NERF BAR
(c) A special bumper attached to front, back and sides of a modified stock car in order to prevent the wheels of the one car touching the wheels of another car while racing.

PERFECTA
(a) A betting ploy, whereby the gambler must pick the two runners that come first and second in a race, and get them in the right order, to win.

HAGGADAH
(c) A Jewish sacred book containing the Exodus narrative. It is ritually recited at Passover. It is the only Hebrew book with a long and consistent tradition of illustration.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE
1... Rhl2 Qb8 (2 Qb2 Rhl2... while 2 Qb6 is also met by 2... h5; 2 h5; 3 Qxc3... Kh7 and Black will emerge the exchange ahead.

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Winning post: Paul Chisholm, president, left, and Larry Ingeneri, finance director of Colt Telecom, shares of which soared 482 per cent from 154p to 896 1/2p

Colt canter home to cheer investors in City stakes

Bob Hoskins summed it up in the British Telecom advertising campaign when he uttered the phrase "it's good to talk". Good and certainly profitable if you happen to be one of those City investors who invested heavily in the telecoms sector during 1998.

No fewer than four telecom companies feature in the top 20 best performers, with BT finishing a creditable 30th after a leap of almost 90 per cent in its share price from 478 1/2p to 905 1/2p.

But the star was Colt Telecom, which was first past the post with a huge lead on its nearest rival. This followed a leap in its share price from 154p to 896 1/2p, a staggering 482 per cent — a move that also catapulted the company into the league of the biggest 100 companies in Britain.

Also in the running was Orange, the mobile phone operator, which floated a couple of years ago by British Aerospace and Hutchison Wharfedale, whose shares grew from 26 1/2p to 698 1/2p, or 164 per cent. It was followed by Telewest Communications, a company that also achieved fame as a constituent of the FTSE 100 index before

Michael Clark reports on the winners and losers of this year's stock market steeplechase

earning a penny profit. It started 1998 at 70p and ended on 173 1/2p, a leap of 147 per cent.

In 13th place came Vodafone, Britain's biggest mobile phone operator, with a surge of 537p to 976p, or 122 per cent.

Not bad performances for investors and certainly more rewarding than if they had chosen to leave their hard-earned savings under the bed.

But it was not all plain sailing and, at one stage, there were doubts that the equity market would achieve any gains on the year at all.

After an encouraging start to 1998, buoyed by takeover fever and gains in the banking sector, investors were soon forced to ponder the collapse in Far Eastern economies. An unexpected rise in domestic interest rates in June, sent the pound soaring, which made life increasingly difficult for manufacturers and started the rollercoaster ride that investors were forced to endure for much of the rest of the year.

Having hit an all-time high

of 6,183.7 on July 20, the FTSE 100 had plunged to 4,599.2, its lowest level of the year, by October 8. It closed on Wednesday, at 5,882.6, a rise on the year of 747.1, or 14.5 per cent.

The outlook for 1999 remains uncertain. There is no shortage of money finding its way into the market, interest rates are falling and the high levels of corporate activity show no signs of abating. Against that must be set the slowdown in the UK economy, the slump in the Far East and continuing market volatility.

Another successful start in 1998 was information technology. No less than six IT companies featured in the top 20 best performers of fully listed shares. The sector would have even more impressive gains had it not been for a wobble during the final quarter as investors began to worry about the impact of recession on earnings growth.

Many IT companies are

closely linked to the investment banking sector, which has undergone heavy rationalisation in recent months. This makes the likelihood of increased expenditure on new computer systems and the updating of old ones less likely.

The best performance came from RM with a leap of 304p to 463 1/2p, or 190 per cent. Similar performances were seen in Sherwood International, up from 530p to £13.55 (155 per cent), London Bridge Software, 508 1/2p to £12.87 1/2 (153 per cent), Logica, 231 1/2p to £22 1/2p (125 per cent), Kewill Systems, 570p to £12.75 (123 per cent) and FI Group, up from 153 1/2p to 329 1/2p (111 per cent).

But not all companies struck the right chord with investors during 1998. The expected revival for retailers failed to materialise. Instead, they had to face up to tougher trading conditions with profit warnings sprinkled liberally throughout the year. One of the worst performers was House of Fraser, down from 200 1/2p to 52p, or 74

per cent. At the other end of the high street, JJB Sports plunged 64 per cent from 64p to 23 1/2p as the craze for replica football shirts came apart at the seams amid falling prices and increased competition.

The big ticket retailers, such as the carpet and furniture stores, were also hit. They saw their shares collapse in the wake of a plethora of profit warnings. A case in point was Harveys Furnishings, which saw its price fall 170p to 101 1/2p (63 per cent) on the back of several profit warnings. Other retailers to feel the pinch included MFI Furniture, 120p to 34 1/2p (71 per cent), and the supermarket chain Aldays, down 342p (66 per cent) to 171 1/2p.

Booker found itself left on the shelf after a difficult year that saw it jilted not once, but twice. First, it was in bid talks with Somerfield. But the talks faltered and it later became clear that Somerfield had taken a look at the company and did not like what it found. A profits warning was followed by talks with Budgens, another supermarket chain. But once again the talks came to nothing and were followed by another profits warning.

This was all very bad news for Stuart Rose, the man brought in to revive Booker's fortunes. He bought a large chunk of shares before being forced to issue the profit warnings. They finished the year at 492 1/2p (80 per cent) lower at 62p. The fall from grace of Albert Heijn, another food distributor, has been as swift as it has been dramatic. The shares started the year at 36 1/2p and closed on Wednesday at 5 1/2p, a fall of 86 per cent. Boardroom upheavals combined with a series of profit warnings to drive the shares lower.

Incompatibles was another significant casualty in 1998 after the quality of its blood vessel supports, or stents, to be supplied to Johnson & Johnson was called into question. The shares started the year at 492 1/2p and finished it at 86p, a loss of 82 per cent.

The inescapable rise of Regent Inns since its flotation in 1993 came to a shuddering halt in June as it served up a profits warning, laced with accounting errors. Its shares crashed 140p that day to 176 1/2p and any chance of a recovery has been scuppered by the dire summer weather and the gloomy outlook for consumer spending. Its shares ended the year 69 per cent lower at 101 1/2p.

Powerscreen provided a classic example of how ruthless the City can be at the merest hint of scandal. It provided one of the most dramatic falls seen in the stock market last year in the wake of the discovery of accounting irregularities. Having started the year at 607 1/2p, it ended at 11 1/2p, a loss of 493p, or 81 per cent.

Bank	Share	Bank	Share
Australia S.	2.57	Bank	2.57
Austrian B.	20.60	Bank	18.94
Belgium B.	80.62	Bank	55.66
Canada S.	2.999	Bank	2.499
Cyprus C.	0.0711	Bank	0.7999
Denmark S.	11.17	Bank	10.28
Egypt	5.89	Bank	5.24
Finland S.	9.02	Bank	8.26
France F.	9.81	Bank	9.03
Germany D.	2.948	Bank	2.709
Greece S.	49	Bank	3.03
Hong Kong S.	13.67	Bank	12.47
India S.	1.0711	Bank	1.0947
Indonesia	1.6804	Bank	1.1504
Ireland F.	1.1737	Bank	1.0947
Israel S.	293	Bank	2894
Italy L.	12.25	Bank	11.14
Japan Y.	293	Bank	2894
Malaysia	0.981	Bank	0.802
Netherlands G.	3.229	Bank	3.034
New Zealand	13.23	Bank	12.29
Norway F.	293	Bank	2894
Portugal S.	10.39	Bank	9.43
Spain P.	248.16	Bank	229.37
Sweden S.	14.24	Bank	13.14
Switzerland F.	2.444	Bank	2.228
Taiwan S.	1.765	Bank	1.622
USA S.	1.765	Bank	1.622

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Fifty years of favourites

Are You Sitting Comfortably?
BBC1, 4.05pm

That lovely little trail for BBC children's programmes (it even had its own title — Future Generations) may have given you — never mind the smaller members of your family — a taste for this omnibus of clips from *Muffin the Mule* by through the decades to Teletubbies. 50 years of programming for children so you're bound to find something you remember, whatever your age. *Bagpuss?* *Pogles Wood?* How about *Muffin the Mule* Swap Shop? Viewers have been voting for their favourites by phone, letter and e-mail and today we'll hear which programme is their overall poll-winner. Meanwhile, celebrities have their say... for Gary Lineker you can't beat *Blue Peter*. The Clangers are at the centre of Patrick Moore's universe and Angus Rippin is nostalgic for *The Magic Roundabout*.

UK Confidential — A Leviathan Special
BBC2, 6.40pm

For the first time television has been given advance sight of the secret documents closed until January 1 of each year under the 30 year rule. So, though we haven't yet got what the Americans pride themselves on — a Freedom of Information Act — we can now see the true picture of events in 1968 as kept under wraps by the Public Record Office. Says presenter Mark Urban: "I think viewers will be surprised by how directly our 1968 film relate to 1998 headlines." Included are Brian Walden's report on Prime Minister Harold Wilson's "inside stories" and a look at the declassification process within the Foreign Office. Other contributors are James Callaghan, Roy Jenkins, Barbara Castle, Dennis Healey and other key ministers from 1968. We're told that the release of today amounts to "a mile and a half" of primed material — *Leviathan* has been working over several months to mine the nuggets.

My Favourite Frasier
Channel 4, 9.00pm

Kelsey Grammer has played the Seattle radio shrink Dr Frasier Crane for 14 years (introducing the character in 1993) and this evening sees a celebration of the kind only television can do for its



Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer star in a new comedy series (BBC2, 10.15pm)

own. We start with high profile stars from both sides of the Atlantic picking their favourite episode, plus the choices of writers, producers, cast members, even the odd psychiatrist. Kelsey's own favourite (9.30pm) is the wonderful *Our Father Who Art Ain't in Heaven* — then there's a documentary on the making of the show (10pm) and the chance for viewers to vote for their favourite episode (10.40pm). After all this abuzzing the evening ends in *Cheers* (11.00pm) with more classic one-liners from the good doctor, then a regular at that much-missed pub.

Bang, Bang, It's Reeves and Mortimer
BBC2, 10.15pm

Thank goodness. Not that one has anything against *Shooting Stars* but it did tend to be our hyperactive heroes to a desk and a (sort of) quiz format. Now, with one bound, they are free again to do what they do best. After a three-year absence from their mould-breaking sketch show *Vic and Bob* return with some old faces... folk singers Mulligan and O'Leary, Tim Funn and the Sticks are just some of them. But there's plenty of stars new... Mr Hex the Road Safety Woodpecker will be a permanent fixture and a docusoap called *The Club* with Vic as owner, bouncer and compere. Kinky John is not to be missed. The supporting cast includes Charlie Higson and... Mortimer Banks. Elizabeth Cowley

RADIO CHOICE

Small Worlds
BBC World Service, 3.15pm

Cleo Paskala's six-part documentary is about what the world's smaller nations are doing to avoid the man-made environmental disasters that threaten the survival of their bigger brothers. I can't speak about the rest of the series but I can tell you that episode one is popular sociology with a recognisably human face. The going can, however, sometimes get tough. The Maldives protect their vital tuna supplies by machine gunning the funnels of marauding Japanese vessels and then humiliating the captains and officers by making them parade through the streets. In the Japanese islands the Seychelles had better watch out. There are plans afoot to make them take their rubbish back with them when they fly home.

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.00am Gilles Peterson 8.00 Emma B 11.00 Chris Moyles 3.00pm Scott Mills 6.00 Essential Selection 8.00 Hip Hop Anthems 2.00am John Peel 3.00am Emma B

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Mo Durr 8.00 Sarah Kennedy 10.00 Richard Allen 12.30pm The Huddersfield Town 1.00pm The Sports Zone 2.00pm Alan Gaisie 3.00pm Lynne Parsons 4.00pm The Band: A Review of 1998 10.00 Radio 2 Young Musician 1998 Showcases 11.00 Lynne Parsons

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

6.00am Propp's Hoops (1) 6.30 Breakfast 9.00 Brian Hayes 12.00 The Midday News 1.00pm Ruscoe and Co 3.00 The Scottish Premier League, Motherwell v Kilmarnock 5.00 Drive with Jonathan Legard and Lynn Bowles 7.00 News Extra with Eric Dean 7.30 Alan Gaisie 8.00pm Sportsnight 9.00 Park Life, Mark O'Donnell finds out how Ron Noades runs Brentford Football Club 10.00 Late Night Live 1.00am Up All Night, Richard Dwyer presents worldwide news coverage. Plus, updates from the live feed of the 16th Test between Australia and England in Sydney 4.00 Extra Time (1)

VIRGIN

6.00am Richard Allen 10.00 Russ Williams 2.00pm Nick Abbott 6.00 Wheels of Steel 10.00 Mark Forrest 2.00am Paul Coyne

TALK RADIO

6.00am Russell Grant's New Year Breakfast 9.00 Kate Lloyd 12.00 An Audience with Tony Bennett (1) 5.00 Mike Allen 2.00am Mike Dixon

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air with Stephanie Hughes 9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday, includes Chopin (Fantasy-Improvisation in C sharp minor, Op 66) 10.15 The New Year's Day Concert Live from the Golden Hall of Vienna's Musikverein. Sir John Eliot Gardiner introduces the Vienna Philharmonic's traditional New Year concert of music by the Strauss family. This year's guest conductor is Lorin Maazel 10.50 New Year Special. The first of two programmes in which Andrew Jefford examines handcrafted cigars 11.15 Concert, part two 12.35pm Telemann (Sonata in A minor for recorder, violin and continuo, BWV 1013) (Music) Performed by the Paladino Ensemble 12.50 The Harmonic Series with Adrian Jack 1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert The Cardinal's Mass performs Gregorian chant music written for the 19th-century dukes of Anjou 2.00 The BBC Orchestra Under the baton of Vernon Handley and Nicholas Braithwaite, David Wilson-Johnson, conductor 3.50 The Harmonic Series 4.00 Mozart Voices Michael Oliver talks to Thomas Allen, last in series 4.45 Music to Die For: Jeanette Winterson discusses Strauss's Act 3 Trio from *Der Rosenkavalier* (5/5)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast 5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day 5.47 Farming Today with Steve Peacock 6.00 Today Introduced by Sue MacGregor and 6.00 Desert Island Discs Bob Morrison looks back on a lifetime's achievements (1) 9.45 (FM) Serials Peter Pen and Wendy The first of the classic detective series, by J.M. Carr 9.45 (LW) An Act of Worship 10.00 Woman's Hour with Janet Murray 11.00 Summer Pastimes Dylan Winter rides with cowboys of the Pitchfork Ranch, Wyoming, whose way of life is threatened by big-game hunters 11.30 The Oldest Member: The Awarding of Rolf Pomeroy New series. Maurice Denham stars as the golf club veteran in P.G. Wodehouse's stories 12.00 (FM) News 12.04 You and Yours John Waite looks most consumer concerns 12.00 (LW) News Headlines: Shipping Forecast 1.00 The World as One Presented by Guto Harri 1.30 Screen Test Brian Sibley chairs the second semi of the film quiz, from the Cornishhouse Cinema, Manchester 2.00 The Archers (1) 2.15 Afternoon Play: Open Secrets — Vandalia The last of five Canadian short stories by Alice Munro. Lisa's return to a childhood home rekindles long-buried memories. With Buffy Davis, Rhonda Miller and Adam Sims 3.00 Making History Roger Wilkes helps listeners reason their own historical mysteries 3.30 Reading: Ten Poems About Seaside Barn Street talks to Charlotte Green and reads his sequence of poems inspired by Radio 4 3.45 Lullaby for Insomniacs: A Christmas Eve story about a princess unable to sleep. Read by Juliet Stevenson. See Choice

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.5-99.5. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6. LW 198. MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 683, 903. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.5; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1063, 1089. Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thompson, Jane Gregory and John McNamee.



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In truth, Stanley's laurels were well earned

Stanley Baxter retired from television in 1996. ITV offered us the next best thing to a new Christmas special in Stanley Baxter In Person, a rare interview with the very private comedian, and a one-hour clip-fest of his greatest moments.

Baxter belongs to that elite thespian fraternity whose nostrils are so expressively wide and flared that they hardly need to act. Think of the sinister exposed septum of Lee Van Cleef in the spaghetti westerns, or Kenneth Williams using his vast frontal cavities as in-your-face camp accessories. Baxter himself sports a pair of car-port size nostrils, and yet, as in all aspects of his performance, he has used them sparingly and with precision.

He remained carefully private, and we learnt precious little about him, although he did provide a tantalising sketch of his mother's aspirations, and a wonderful image of

himself as a boy, wide-eyed at the cinema, munching marmalade and banana sandwiches out of his satchel. His marriage was referred to with respectful minimalism and there was no attempt to probe the psychology of his unendingly brilliant impersonations of female stars.

His own quiet pride in his achievements was mirrored by the quiet, but completely sincere, appreciation of the celebrity contributors. Billy Connolly, Robbie Coltrane, Stephen Fry, Lulu and Rory Bremner were all affectionately reverent, as if discussing the influence on their childhood of a much-loved uncle who had sadly passed on and could not be persuaded, despite their best efforts, to return from the dead.

Fry's admiration for Baxter's performances was actually making him crosser and crosser with the state of television today. "They wouldn't do it now. They just pat-

ronise the hell out of the audience," he fumed, adding later that his shows were "the last time when television could actually contain intelligence and wit and broad humour and delight and pleasure, all in the same basket".

I may well be true that such lavish sets and high production values are a thing of the past, and there is certainly more and more deeply patronising garbage passed off as light entertainment these days, but talented performers still get their shots, mercifully. The reason there is nobody like Stanley Baxter on television is that there is nobody like Stanley Baxter.

The programme started 15 minutes before Rory Bremner's own New Year Special, The Greatest Rory Ever Told, on Channel 4. A live Bremner presented Baxter's Lifetime Achievement Award at the Barbican, like his hero's, his im-

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

personations are often uncannily accurate. He is versatile and his material is unusually intelligent. You might think this would give the lie to Fry's jeremiad, but it doesn't, for the simple reason that it often isn't all that funny, raising crinkly smiles rather than joyous guffaws.

Bremner definitely suffered from the comparison. If he wasn't so rich, talented and successful,

you might almost feel sorry for him. At least Baxter didn't mean it, unlike the asserted Euro-dross on Naked Extraversion (BBC1), a look behind the scenes at last summer's Eurovision Song Contest in Birmingham. This was perrier docu-soap material and would doubtless be signed up already if they didn't have to wait a year between filming opportunities.

Still, we had a camp star, in the Israeli transsexual winner Dana International (why is she named after an airport?). The resident nut was Yannis, a disgraced Greek composer, boorish, disruptive, stragely bearded and with a chip on his shoulder the size of the Elgin Marbles. But they were a sad lot and would have been much more entertaining played by Stanley Baxter.

It is a tribute to Stella Gibbons that any year in which a sophisticated, but basically innocent, town child arrives to stay with morose,

yet disturbing country relatives, is compared to *Cold Comfort Farm*. Of course Gibbons' spoof only worked because she was parodying a genre which already had an ancient pedigree. The Orchard Walls, the second of *The Ruth Rendell Mysteries* (ITV), was so firmly planted in this soil that even though the creaking door and leering loony factor was applied with a light touch, it nevertheless all felt pretty formulaic.

A variant of the theme is the *The Go-Between* scenario, in which the visitors find themselves unwittingly caught up in the dangerous, secret passions of the household. This story had that too as wartime evacuee Jenny (Honeyuckle Weeks) discovers the secret passion between the daughter-in-law of the house and a dashing captain, a soldier who could not care less what happened to any of them. Now if Stanley Baxter had taken all the roles...

eyesuckle Weeks (cutesy name, cutesy gait), on the other hand, is actually 19-going-on-34. This made her flirtation with the boulder from the Spiffire seem a lot more than the fantasies of an adolescent girl, and the attentions of the horny-handed farm labourer rather less predatory than was perhaps intended. But she caught the air of awakening sensuality and baffled anxiety well enough.

The production was well-crafted, competently acted and good-looking. There were even some vaguely intriguing psychological undertones and the odd sinister frisson. It just felt like going through the motions — yet another murder mystery in yet another house in the country with yet more tangled relationships. Shortly after the last main character had been introduced, I realised I couldn't care less what happened to any of them. Now if Stanley Baxter had taken all the roles...

6.30am Children's BBC: Teletubbies (7808307) 6.55 Postman Pat (2909710) 7.10 Arthur (2255197) 7.35 Barnaby Rudge (3216197) 8.00 Yogi's Treasure Hunt (5028044) 8.30 Blue Peter: Magic Moments (3485541) 8.50 Taz-Mania (7708642) 9.15 911 Live in Malaysia (5800062)

9.40 The Fame Game: New Year Special (1543535) 10.35 Razzamatazz Teletubbies (1543535) 10.35 Razzamatazz Teletubbies (1543535) 10.35 Razzamatazz Teletubbies (1543535)

11.00 The Little Rascals (1994) Premiere: A gang of mischievous children set out to sabotage their friend's blossoming romance, and prepare for an important go-kart race. Children's comedy, with appearances by Mel Brooks, Whoopi Goldberg and David Hasselhoff. Directed by Penelope Spheeris (T) (8795555)

12.20pm Wipeout (T) (4838555) **12.45 Laughing for Ages (6/6)** (T) (298975) **1.15 News: Regional News; Weather (T)** (8498973)

1.25 Neighbours Hannah and Paul are strapped for cash (T) (8068562) **1.50 Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968)** Classic musical children's adventure about an eccentric inventor who rescues his car from the clutches of a villain and gives it magical powers. Dick Van Dyke and Lionel Jeffries star. Directed by Ken Hughes (T) (2989738)

4.05 [REDACTED] Are You Sitting Comfortably? A look back at some of the nation's favourite children's programmes (T) (8068562) **4.45 Neighbours Hannah and Paul are strapped for cash (T)** (T) (1022577) **4.55 News: Regional News; Weather (T)** (5898328)

5.25 K-9 (1989) An obsessive cop finds himself partnered with a lovable Alsatian who soon gives him a run for his money. Fast-moving comedy, starring James Belushi, Mel Harris, Ed O'Neill and Kevin Tighe. Directed by Rod Daniel (T) (8795555)

7.00 The World's Strongest Man The final from Morocco (T) (8068562) **8.00 Apollo 13 (1995) Premiere:** Oscar-winning, fact-based drama, starring Tom Hanks as Jim Lovell, the leader of the ill-fated 1970 Apollo 13 mission. The mission is plagued by a series of mechanical problems which cause the spacecraft to abandon its landing and put the lives of the crew in danger. With Kevin Bacon, Bill Paxton, Ed Harris and Gary Sinise. Directed by Ron Howard (T) (24087975)

10.15 News: Regional News; Weather (T) (797894) **10.35 Airplane II: The Sequel (1982)** The madcap team return to wreak havoc on board a space shuttle. Disaster spoof, starring Robert Hays, Julie Hagerty and William Shatner. Directed by Ken Finkleman (T) (251791)

11.55 Fletch Lives (1989) Comedy sequel, starring Chevy Chase as a reporter and a man of disguise who inherits a mansion and gets entangled in a murder mystery. Directed by Michael Ritchie (T) (251265)

1.25am Weather (4278444) **1.30 BBC News 24 (1815802)**

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SKY MOVIE MAX: 6.00am Wrestling Points (20945) 6.30am Wrestling Points (20945) 6.55am Wrestling Points (20945) 7.20am Wrestling Points (20945) 7.45am Wrestling Points (20945) 8.10am Wrestling Points (20945) 8.35am Wrestling Points (20945) 8.60am Wrestling Points (20945) 8.85am Wrestling Points (20945) 9.10am Wrestling Points (20945) 9.35am Wrestling Points (20945) 9.60am Wrestling Points (20945) 9.85am Wrestling Points (20945) 10.10am Wrestling Points (20945) 10.35am Wrestling Points (20945) 10.60am Wrestling Points (20945) 10.85am Wrestling Points (20945) 11.10am Wrestling Points (20945) 11.35am Wrestling Points (20945) 11.60am Wrestling Points (20945) 11.85am Wrestling Points (20945) 12.10am Wrestling Points (20945) 12.35am Wrestling Points (20945) 12.60am Wrestling Points (20945) 12.85am Wrestling Points (20945) 1.10am Wrestling Points (20945) 1.35am Wrestling Points (20945) 1.60am Wrestling Points (20945) 1.85am Wrestling Points (20945) 2.10am Wrestling Points (20945) 2.35am 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